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THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON,

DELIVERED BY THE

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At Devonshire-Square, on Lord's Day Evening, June 26th 1796.

THE subject with which I would close the solemnities of this day, you will find in Philip. iv. 7. "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ." Read it in connection with the three foregoing verses. "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing: but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God," &c.

Peace, it will be allowed, is an inestimable jewel. No man that has been at all acquainted with the calamities of war, the distress of domestic confusion, or the horrors of a guilty conscience, can dissent from this proposition. Under such circumstances, how often has the heart yielded a sigh on the desirableness of the blessing of peace! But if peace, in the general, be so desirable, what must be said

of the peace of God, which passeth all understanding! Peace among men is healing to the human heart—it is transporting to the human breast, to see the bloody sword sheathed in its scabbard.

It is pleasing to see amity and concord prevail, and old friends meet that have been separated, perhaps by jealousy and misunderstanding: but all this is only between man and man. The peace of God exceeds every thing of this sort, as much as God's ways are above our ways, and his thoughts above our thoughts. As much as the heavens are above the earth, so much is peace with him greater than peace with each other. It is on this subject, that we shall now discourse:

Could the apostle Paul express a better wish than this: "The peace of God," &c.

In discoursing on this subject, we shall, First, *Ask in what this peace consists.* Secondly, *Consider its great use in the Christian life.* Lastly, *Inquire,*

by what means it is to be attained.

Let us try to ascertain what it is—What is this invaluable jewel? What is this peace of God? Depend upon it, it is something valuable, or rather something invaluable, or our Lord Jesus Christ would not have singled that out as his last bequest, at the time he was about to leave his disconsolate disciples, and when his heart was overflowing with tenderness for them. He left them one great blessing. What was it? Not crowns—not kingdoms—No.—It was something far superior to these: “My peace, I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your hearts be troubled.”

The word, which is here rendered “the peace of God,” signifies oneness—union—being gathered into one—reconciliation with God. It is the blessedness of being in a state of reconciliation with God. I should suppose it may include the following ideas:

In the *first place*, *That sweet tranquillity of soul, which arises from a well-grounded persuasion of being accepted by God.* This is what the apostle means, when he says, “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.”—Being accepted through the righteousness of the Redeemer, we have peace with God. I need not inform you, that in our native state, we are all at war with God, and God with us. Sin is the great enemy. It has separated chief friends. God and man, you know, were once great friends; but sin separated those

chief friends, and drew a veil of separation between them. Man became an enemy to God, and God to man. God in the character of a righteous governor was required—his own rectitude required him to be an enemy to man. For he hateth all the workers of iniquity: but, through the mediation of the Son of God, the atonement is made—the blood of the cross heals the breach, and opens the way of communion. God declares himself well-pleased with his dear Son; and every poor sinner, who sues for mercy in his name, finds relief. The past is forgiven—is forgotten. The soul is justified through the redemption of Jesus Christ—the effect of all this is sweet peace.

Who can estimate the sweetness of that enjoyment which arises from a well-grounded persuasion, that God is my Father. To be permitted to say, “I am an heir of blessing. I am no longer under the law, but under grace. I am no longer an alien, but a son or daughter. The blessings of the gospel are to be made my own. Where such are the persuasions, there is the peace of God.

To this I add: The peace of God, I should think, includes *that sweet satisfaction which possesses the mind from a view of God, sitting at the helm of the universe, and having the management of all our concerns.* We are like people who are sailing in a storm. This troubled ocean casts up mire and dirt, and we are continually subject to tempests: and, were it not for the consideration, that we have a pilot at the helm—

2 God who has the turbulent ocean under his control—were it not for the consideration, that the cares of the world were under his direction, what peace could we enjoy? Let me ask you, thinking Christians, when you consider the temper of the world—when you see man hating his fellow man, and see them combining against one another by thousands—when you see the enmity of the heart to be such, that there is hardly any rational hope of peace under the sun, what would quiet your heart but the consideration that God reigns, and “that the inhabitants of the earth are but as grasshoppers—that he maketh the wrath of man to praise him, and that the remainder thereof he doth restrain.” The thought, that Jesus Christ is head over all things to his church, and that all shall contribute to the spread of the gospel, begets that peace in the mind that enabled the psalmist to sing, in the midst of tumult and confusion, “Though the mountains be cast into the depths of the sea, there is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God.” There is a source of consolation to the children of God, to which others are strangers. God will help his people, and that right early.

But I should add one more thought: Is it not necessary, *that we should feel peace in our own consciences?* We cannot experience the peace of God and joy in the Holy Ghost, unless we have the testimony of our consciences, that,

in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the world. Enoch, had the peace of God, when he had this testimony—that he pleased God. By the history which we have of him, which is very short, it appears, that he pleased very few people. He was a thundering preacher in his day; the object of the ill-will of his hearers; but he had the testimony, that he had pleased his God.

That Christian, or that minister, who enjoys a solid, well-grounded persuasion, that he possesses the favour of Jesus Christ; whose confidence is in him who sits at the helm of the universe, who walks with God, and has the testimony of a good conscience, possesses the peace of God.

Let me next proceed to justify the apostle's encomium. He tells us, that “it passeth knowledge.” It is a very strong expression; but, I apprehend it is literally true—it is no hyperbole. Some have interpreted it, that it passeth the understanding of carnal men. That is very true; but that is not a thousandth part of the truth. It is of such value, that the understandings of neither appreciating men nor angels are capable of its worth; the peace of God, none can fully estimate. None but God himself can know its worth. We estimate most things by contrast. As the worth of national peace is best known by those who see the effects of war, so the worth of domestic peace is best known by those who suffer by domestic feuds; so

the value of peace with God cannot be known in any tolerable degree, but by those who experience the horrors of a guilty conscience. Go then, if you would know the value of the peace of God, look at the case of a man who is borne down by worldly sorrow, and who is a stranger to God. Go, visit a poor man, on whom the Lord hath poured out much trouble and distress, under which he almost sinks, and yet he is a stranger to God. He has no refuge to which he can flee in the hour of distress. From this, you will judge in some degree, what a blessed thing it is to have the peace of God. This it was, which made our Lord say, "I send you forth like sheep among wolves," but I give you that which shall be a balance to every load, "into whatsoever house ye enter, say, Peace be to this house." Would you know something of the value of this blessing, go to the room of a poor sinner, whose eyes are opened; whose conscience is awake, but who is without God, in a dying hour. Did you never visit a dying sinner, and take notice of him when he did not expect that he had an hour to live? Did you never see, with what a frightened countenance he views you? O! that pale face! that frightened countenance!—that mind that looks upon the past, with bitter regret, as gone for ever; that looks on that which is to come with horror and dismay! Did you never know such a case? You might know many such instances—they are not rare. There you might learn

something of the value of the peace of God; there a man would give a thousand worlds, if they were all his own, for a well-grounded hope, that his sins were forgiven; there he that once despised religion, the man that has joked and derided serious people, is alarmed, and wishes, that those very people whom he once derided, would come and pray with him. Who can estimate the value of the peace of God! If you can tell the worth of the salvation of a soul—if you can estimate the pains of the damned in hell—if you can reckon the loss of an immortal creature—then can you tell the value of the peace of God.—If you can estimate the worth of celestial enjoyments—all the pleasures resulting from God's favour—then you may calculate the value of the peace of God.

That which endears this blessing to us is not only the importance of it, but the medium through which it comes. The text says, "through Christ Jesus." Do not you think, for example, that the parcel of ground which Jacob gave to Joseph his son was endeared because it was the dying bequest of his beloved father? No doubt it was; that was the singular portion he gave to his son Joseph: and what made it still more valuable, was, that his father had procured it from the Amorites: "which I took out of the hand of the Amorites with my sword and with my bow."—And the peace of God must be endeared, because it was obtained by the shedding of Christ's blood.

How it will enhance its value to the people of God, that it was the price of blood—the blood of the Lamb! There is the divine flavour of it! Heaven itself would not be a thousandth part so pleasant to us, if it had not been obtained in this way. It was obtained by the shedding of Christ's blood!

But we pass on to consider, in the *second* place, *The great use of peace in the Christian conflict*, “the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds.”—The word here translated *keep*, is very expressive: It is a military term, and alludes to soldiers that are in a besieged town; or rather to soldiers that come in aid of others that are besieged. So the peace of God is that to a believer's heart and mind which a relieving army is to those who are besieged. The heart and mind are supposed to be besieged by the temptations of the present world, and in danger of being taken; and the peace of God, like a supply thrown in, affords relief, and prevents their being obliged to give up the contest. This word might perhaps be expressed by the term, *fortified*,—“the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall *fortify* your hearts and minds.” The terms *heart* and *mind* comprehend the soul; the one is put for the affections; the other for the judgment—the peace of God serves as a relief, a fortification for both. Let me here be a little more particular.

There is one set of temptations which assail the heart,

another the mind; and the peace of God serves to fortify our souls against them both. With regard to the former—such as assail the heart—what are those? In times of persecution, the wrath, enmity, and outrage of a wicked world, were such as assailed the heart. It must have been trying to the feelings of the primitive Christians, and all others who have lived in times of persecution. As for our parts, we have so long enjoyed religious peace, that we can scarcely realize the scene. But only consider that those who were persecuted were men like you and I, and their property was, perhaps, obtained by the sweat of their brow—and it was hard to have that wrested from them by fines and imprisonment. They had families. It was hard to be torn flesh from flesh—bone from bone. Perhaps the tears of the wives and children might say, “Spare him for our sakes!” It was cruel—it must needs come close to the heart—they had the feelings of men. Nothing but the peace of God could fortify them. “Behold I send you forth as lambs among wolves.” If they throw you into dungeons—if they deprive you of the honest fruits of your industry—of your friends—your liberty! If they deprive you of all these, they shall not deprive you of one thing—the peace of God!—This you shall be able to carry with you into the darkest dungeons, and it shall cause you to sing praise to God at midnight. There is another set of temptations which assail the heart—these are the allurements of the world—the

former were in the days of yore principally—these in our times. The world seems to be friendly to us: Its pleasures melt resistance. It sometimes captivates the heart; and I know not but enemies of this description are more dangerous to Christians than the others. Many have stood in the hour of persecution—they could fight like Samson against thousands when the Philistines set on him; but, when the smiles of a Delilah come upon them, they, like him, would fall. There is nothing so good an antidote to this as the peace of God in the heart. But peace in the heart does not include carnal ease. I grant that *that* is no friend, but an enemy. Peace and union with God are the best fortification of the heart against the allurements of sense. Not all the terrors of Sinai, nor the curses of the law are so good a preservative as the peace of God in the heart—and why so? It affords superior pleasure to that of the world. It rises infinitely above it. You know very well that when a superior light shines forth, it eclipses an inferior one; so when the sun shines forth, the lesser lights, the moon and stars, hide their heads—they are lost. The peace of God affords so much a superior pleasure in the soul, as to overcome flesh and sense. Thus it is that faith overcomes. You have often read that expressive passage—“Who is he that overcometh the world; but he that believeth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” Faith penetrates futurity, it rends the veil and pierces into

an unknown world—it fixes the eye on eternity, and these little worlds disappear—the heart becomes dead to the pleasures of sense. It was thus that Moses “seeing him that was invisible,” became dead to the pleasures of the Egyptian court. It is not, then, very difficult to perceive how the peace of God, a solid, well-grounded peace, communion with God through our Lord Jesus Christ tends to make a man dead to the world through the cross of Christ.

Again, there is a third temptation with which the heart is assailed, and this is, The sorrows of the world. The losses, the bereaving losses, trials, and disappointments, which befall the children of God, which, on some occasions, are so complicated, so heavy, and so lasting, that the heart is in danger of yielding to despondency. “O that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together! For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea, therefore my words are swallowed up,” that is, I want words to express my grief; that intolerable load of grief that rankles in my bosom. —My heart is in danger of yielding to despondency. Nothing but the peace of God can now preserve it. The thought that God rules and over-rules all—that whatever befalls us is under his appointment—that every evil is overruled by him for our good. Such thoughts as these, which constitute the peace of God, bear up the soul, and keep it

from sinking under all the loads of distress by which it is burdened.

Once more :—There is another temptation ; and that is, Despair under a load of guilt. I do not know but this may be the heaviest of all. When guilt is fixed on the conscience, and with such strong chains, that it becomes impossible for us to break them, the temptation to sink under despair becomes very great. O ! how many wretched souls, under a consciousness of guilt, sink in desperation. It was thus Cain was swallowed up—“Mine iniquity is greater than I can bear.” It was thus that Judas was swallowed up—“I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood ;” and, in his despair, he went and hanged himself. Such a load of guilt as this, even the wrath of God, is greater than a poor sinner can bear. But there is that which will bear us up—the peace of God will keep, will sustain, will fortify the heart, even under this load.

Here is the difference between a good man, when he falls into sin, and a bad man. When Saul rebelled against God, and God expressed his displeasure against him, he sunk in despair ! When David sinned against God, and God by Nathan had reproved him for his sin, he flew into the arms of Divine Mercy. “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.” A

view of the Divine Goodness bore him up. Though at a great distance from God, yet some faint gleam preserved him from despair. It is true the waves of sin rolled over him, but the mercy of God was like a rope held out to him, by the laying hold on which he was saved. “Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord, Lord, hear my voice. Let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand ? But there is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared.”

What phrase, what terms could the apostle have used that could be more expressive ! “The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds”—shall support you under affliction, and shall afford relief under the impressions of a guilty conscience. But we pass on—

The mind, as well as the heart, is assailed by various temptations and difficulties. The mind is expressive of the intellectual part of man. The temptations to which the mind is exposed are, chiefly, pernicious principles and distracting cares.

The pernicious principles that circulate in the world are like so many poisoned arrows aimed at the heart, and we need to be as much fortified against these as against any others which I have mentioned. God has thought fit to try his people by suffering them to go forth. It must needs be, that there must be scoffers walking after their own ungodly lusts.

—There must be infidels who should ridicule the Bible and those that profess its doctrines. These are so many fans by which God thoroughly purges his floor, which is composed, methinks, of grain and chaff. There are many professors who are merely chaff; and these pernicious principles—these scoffs—these jeers, that are uttered against the gospels are like so many blasts of wind by which the chaff is blown away, while the grain shall stand and withstand.

God permits pernicious principles, under the name of Christianity, to go forth. There must needs be heresies among you—these are a kind of poisoned arrows that are aimed at the mind, the judgment, and, if they stick, the poison of them very soon infects the whole frame; for that which once fixes on the judgment presently affects the whole soul—the whole man. Here we need, therefore, to be particularly fortified—we need the arm of God to keep us. One of the seven churches is commended because it had kept the faith; and, therefore, God says, “I also will keep you in the hour of temptation.” Keep right with God—keep close to God—keep conversant with the gospel of peace—walk close to the God of peace, and these arrows shall not touch you. You shall be secure from every fiery dart.

To these I would add, Distracting cares. For, as the mind is in danger of being pierced and tainted with pernicious principles, it is equally liable to be hurt and interrupted

by distracting cares. The mind, or the judgment, is in man like one who sits at the helm of a ship—it is that superior thing which governs and controls all other things. The mind has the reins of the soul in its hand, and our Lord says, “In patience possess ye your souls.” But, when distracting cares come upon us, the mind is in danger of being swept away from the helm—the mind, if once confounded, is in great danger. But I may say, as I said before, the peace of God; that sweet peace which arises from communion with God, is the best preservative. Let that once get possession, and you will ride out the storm and enjoy serenity amidst all the tumultuous scenes which are passing before your eyes.

But it is time to draw to a close. I will therefore conclude with a few observations, showing how this inestimable blessing is to be obtained. You have only to look at the preceding context.

You may observe, there are three things pointed out by which it is to be obtained. One is, that we should feel an habitual joy in God. “Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.” O what a blessed art this is to be able to rejoice in God, come what will! The primitive Christians had learned this heavenly art of not being moved by any of the vicissitudes of fortune: “They rejoiced alway.” If persecutions broke out against them, they rejoiced that they were thought worthy to suffer—so come what will, they would rejoice. They were

like the industrious bee, who goes forth seeking honey; he extracts honey from every opening flower. Be it to others sweet or bitter, it is all alike to him. Such is Christianity; and, if we entered into it, it would teach us to rejoice in God, whatever befalls us; though there should be no fruit on our vine, or no flocks in our folds, yet we should rejoice in God. Cultivate this spirit, and then the peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds. You will be armed with this armour of God, and will be able successfully to defend yourself against any enemy.

The thing next recommended, is Moderation. Do not be concerned at either the smiles or the frowns of this world. If providence smile upon you, do not be elated: be moderate in your attachments; or, if she frown upon you, do not be immoderately cast down. It is not the smiles of providence that can make you, nor her frowns that can unmake you. Your possessions are in another state. You have not hazarded all your substance in one vessel, I hope. The man of the world may be greatly interested, because, if one vessel sink, all his treasures are lost. But your chief treasures are embarked on board another vessel—one that cannot sink. You may cultivate a noble independence. "The Lord is at hand." Time is passing away, and then all those little things which now distract men's minds will distract them no longer. The Lord is about to descend from Heaven, and all these little things

will disappear. Let your moderation be seen by all about you. If this spirit is cultivated by you, you will be fortified against every evil. You will have a better armour than Ahab had in the day of battle—nothing can pierce it.—But,

Lastly, We are here recommended to cultivate a noble indifference respecting things in this state; and to commit them to God. "Be careful for nothing." The apostle does not here mean that we are to care for nothing—that we are not to be contriving schemes, but that we are to divest ourselves of that kind of distracting care which unfits us for religion. Be careful in this way for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God, with resignation to his will, and the peace of God will most assuredly keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge of Christ Jesus. Amen.

SOURCES

OF CHRISTIAN CONSOLATION.

It is a consideration which enhances the value of the gospel in no small degree, that it is in its own nature calculated to yield the most solid and permanent satisfaction to guilty men. It is truly "good news to perishing sinners." Most painful, however, is the fact, that many of its friends enjoy but a small share of its consolations. This is very much owing to the persons them-

selves; for although God *may*, as a Sovereign, withdraw his smiles from his people at times, without any particular cause in them; yet there is reason to apprehend that this is very, very rarely the case.

I shall in this paper endeavour to point out the sources of Christian consolation; and attempt, as I go along, to stir up the mind of the believer in Jesus to seek these sources of enjoyment.

I. Our Lord Jesus himself, is, in the sacred writings, styled, "The consolation of Israel," Luke, ii. 25. His unchangeable grace and mercy; his glorious obedience unto death, and the divine intercession of him who is the Lord our Redeemer, is replete with comfort to the lost and undone sinner. While the despairing soul has his attention directed to this source of mercy, his unbelief receives a death-wound; his distracting fears are hushed to silence, and "believing he is filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Here he beholds himself exonerated from his oppressive load of guilt, and delivered from "the wrath to come." In proportion as the heart enters into this subject will his joy abound. It is not a speculative acquaintance with Jesus Christ and him crucified, or, having the understanding alone illuminated with its radiance, which can give solid satisfaction to the conscience. The genial rays of the sun may shine on the adamant rock, but it will remain barren and fruitless; the Sun of righteousness must, by his beams, pene-

trate the heart, if ever the heart rejoice in its rays. The soul must be taken up, yea, delighted in Christ, if it would enjoy his consolations. Evident beyond contradiction is it, that many are so much carried away with other things that Christ is almost overlooked. Some favourite point in theology, or some mere matter of opinion has engrossed the time and attention of such professors. Such a point is canvassed in every company; such an opinion is the theme of all conversation, while the mind is rendered most miserably frigid in its perceptions of the love of Jesus. The apostle Paul "always triumphed,"—but it was "in Christ;" and if we would always triumph we must live as he did, "by the faith of Christ Jesus." "He rejoiced always,"—but it was "in the Lord." Phil. iv. 4. How pitiable, how much worse than contemptible is it, when the Christian can please himself with questions which only engender strife, and live in the neglect of the great source of all consolations for time, and enjoyment for eternity!

II. Another absolute source of consolation is, the volume of divine grace. Here Jehovah utters all the kindness of his heart. How cordial are the invitations of mercy to the miserable soul! How animating are its prospects to the desponding heart! How richly fraught with blessings of eternal importance, are all its promises to the impoverished sinner! This revelation of truth discovers the way of reconcilia-

tion with God, the path of truth, safety, and life. After the poor sinner has been led to taste of this fountain of joy, it is sweeter to him than honey, or the honey-comb. But, when the mind is called off from close reflection on the contents of this discovery of grace divine, we may easily account for the want of consolation which so many are heard to deplore. Is there not reason to fear, that such persons seldom, very seldom, read the word of God?—or, if it be read as a part of family-worship, how seldom is it read with close application of its truths to the heart, or with fervent prayer in secret! a chapter or two are hastily read as a task, rather than fed on as the bread of God.—With how many others is it common to read only to find proofs for some favourite opinion, or to furnish matter for angry debate, rather than godly edifying. If thus we read the sacred word of God, let us not be surprised if we experience little of its consolations. We do not enter into the spirit of it, and betray an ignorance of its leading design—to bring the soul to God.

But there are also minor sources of consolation, which, to a man of God, are of great importance. Of these, I shall mention one or two. While “The Comforter” is bringing the things of Christ to the soul, and making his own word the joy of the heart.

III. The Christian will find a good conscience, towards God and men, of singular moment as a source of consolation. It is

true, a good conscience is only to be enjoyed by the blood of Christ being sprinkled upon it; or, having such an application of the blood and righteousness of Jesus to the soul, as fully convinces the conscience, that God can, and does forgive sin, and justify sinners in harmony with all his divine attributes. But the Apostle Paul speaks also of a good conscience arising from a sense of having sincerely attempted to promote the glory of God and the welfare of men, 2 Cor. i. 12. “For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.” Paul was a minister of the gospel. If he had attempted to soften any of its truths to adapt them to the carnal relish of men—if he had concealed any of them for fear of giving offence—if he had dropped into an imitation of the fripperies of Grecian philosophers; or had preferred smoothness of cadence, harmony of periods, or rhetorical flourishes to the plain and simple declaration of Christ, and him crucified—to have uttered the words I have quoted would have been his confusion. Paul was a Christian: If he had lived in the known neglect of any moral, or positive precept of Zion’s lawgiver in order to indulge in fleshly ease; or to avoid the reproach of men; or, by an apprehension, that by a prompt regard to such precepts, his temporalities might

have been injured: His conscience would rather have been asleep, or seared, than have been a good conscience towards God and men. To have a good conscience, a man must live as God would have him to live; must walk in all uprightness of heart and life; be able to appeal to God, that he has not omitted a practical regard to all his will, as far as he has understood that will. The consolation arising from this reflection is incalculably great. Under misrepresentations, revilings, and bitter persecutions, the man of God will be able to say, with a worthy minister of the 17th century who was imprisoned for his firmness in the cause of Christ,—

“ My charged crime, in his due time,
He fully will decide:
And until then, forgiving men,
In peace with him I ’bide.” *

IV. Another source of consolation arises from the reflection, that ere long the Christian will be as perfect in his own person, and as happy in his circumstances, as his soul could wish.

Christianity, while it provides the richest cordials for men who have received it in truth, adapted to every affliction in life, it also holds to view the most animating and cheering prospects in an eternal world. The perfect purity of the soul; the resurrection of the body, and its re-union with the soul at the last day; the enjoyment of God as an everlasting portion — these are enjoyments indeed! These are all secured

to the man who takes refuge in Jesus. With what admiration, with what rapture, does the afflicted and despised, but upright follower of the Lamb of God look forward to these realities. After having travelled through howling deserts; after having been tossed on the surges of distracting cares; after having been even in deaths often, the cool, the sober conclusion of his mind, is this: “ I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” Rom. viii. 18. If such are not our consolations, “ is there not some secret thing with us?” Are we not giving up our minds so to temporal and perishable things, as not only to lose sight of, but even the relish for, eternal things? If we can find time for protracted reflections on trade, for unwearied pursuits of gain, giving these things all, or nearly all our time, our talents, and affections, they soon, like the canker-worm, will eat out the vitals of Christian consolation. We cannot, in such circumstances, enter into the joys of Heaven, for the things of a moment have enthroned themselves in the heart; the heart, under their influence, is feeding on every vanity.

It is obvious to every person acquainted with the word of God, that there are many sources of consolation besides these I have mentioned; but the design was only to call the attention of the reader to some of the first importance.

Shipley.

J. M.

THE
PARADOXICAL SAYINGS
OF
THE APOSTLE PAUL
IMPROVED.

(No. II.)

"As unknown and yet well known."

2 Cor. vi. 9.

JUST views of God, of the worship he will accept, and of the character which he approves, can only be obtained from revelation. But such is the darkness of the understanding, and the total depravity of human nature, until divine knowledge is imparted by the energy of the Holy Spirit, we shall remain ignorant of those things in which we are most deeply interested, and treat with neglect or contempt the momentous concerns of eternity. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." While men are unenlightened by the spirit of God, they have no just discernment of divine truth, and are equally ignorant of the true character of those who live under its influence. The spiritual man who is born of the spirit, and is regulated by his dictates, is discerned of no man. In this respect, the apostles were unknown; they did not disseminate their doctrines in private, nor in obscure situations, but agreeably to the command of their Divine Master, beginning at Jerusalem, which had been the scene of his ministry, and where many of his miracles

were performed, they published the important facts of our Lord's sufferings, death, and resurrection; and afterwards, in the chief cities, they made known the glad tidings of salvation. They excited universal notice, and such was the extended sphere in which they moved, that "their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world;" still they were unknown in their true character to all who rejected their message. The Redeemer foretold the accumulated sufferings, which his servants should experience, and attributed these to the ignorance of their enemies; "they shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth God service, and these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father nor me." Thus, while the Saviour was in the world, and, although the world was made by him, yet it knew him not. While the carnal multitudes were engrossed with their evil pursuits, blind to all spiritual discernment, and dead to all spiritual enjoyment saw no beauty in him, that he should be desired; his disciples, whose understandings were opened to discern his true dignity and exalted character, declared, "we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth—" "and of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace:" They were not only witnesses of this glory, but they became partakers of it; they received

grace, according to the various and abundant grace treasured up in *Him*; producing in them all those gracious dispositions, which dwell in perfection in *Him*, who in all things has the pre-eminence. This is mentioned as one instance of the superior excellency of the gospel dispensation. The glory of Moses's countenance was not reflected upon any of the Israelites, they could not even behold it; but the apostle, speaking of the glory of the Redeemer, says, that it is reflected upon all his disciples. "But we all, with unveiled minds, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord; are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord;" thus is that resemblance to the Saviour begun on earth, which shall be perfected in Heaven, agreeably to the gracious purpose of God, who hath predestinated us to be conformed to the image of his Son; and hence it is, that those who know not the Lord Jesus have no just discernment of his followers; therefore, "the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." The Christian life being a life of faith, in its nature, enjoyments, and consummation, it is altogether unknown to the world. Earthly good is the summit of the unrenewed man's ambition; after things unseen and eternal he never aspires: the Christian's happiness consists in the enjoyment of the favour and image of God, and, in the possession of these, he experiences more joy than all created good is

calculated to impart—"There be many that say, who will shew us any good? Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us; thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased." From opposing principles within, and temptations from without, he may have reason to exclaim, "O wretched man, that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" but, while the ungodly are unacquainted with this spiritual warfare, they are equally ignorant of that happiness which is connected with a full acknowledgment of sin, and holy mourning over it before God, and to the joy arising from the cheering hope of being delivered from its existence. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

While the apostles of our Lord were thus unknown in their true character; exalted dignity, happy enjoyments, and future anticipations, they were well known to myriads who were, by their instrumentality, made partakers of the like precious faith with themselves. There existed a blessed and holy fellowship in their joint participation of the blessings of salvation; a unity of sentiment and affection; the same experience, trials, and prospects, "that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." The angels of God were spec-

tators of their zealous and successful labours, and participated in the joy that accrued from the conversion of sinners, by their instrumentality. They were well known to their God and Saviour, who beheld them with approbation and rendered their labours effectual, from which the greatest good accrued to man, and the highest glory to God. In them, and in the success of every faithful minister of Christ, his promise is verified, "Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." While ungodly men are incapable of discerning the character, and appreciating the labours of the true servants of God, the divine approbation is their highest satisfaction. "Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him."—"In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God."

Whitchurch, Salop.

J. H.

THOUGHTS ON SLEEP.

SLEEP may be justly contemplated as a wonderful law of nature; but it has been observed by a very acute anonymous author, that, strictly speaking, "sleep is rather an affection of the mind than a property of the body, and therefore more naturally a subject of metaphysics than of physiology." But we are by no means sufficiently acquainted with this important law of our constitutions, nor the modus of operation to develope it accurately. That the human constitution

should require, at such short intervals, this kind of stupor, or insensibility, to recruit its wasted energy, is truly wonderful. It is a mark of Divine Wisdom, that some of the most important functions of the animal economy should be involuntary, such as respiration, perspiration, and the circulation of the blood; for the nervous system is comparatively paralised; the ears cannot hear an ordinary sound; nor the eyes see, no, not those who have been known to sleep with their eyes open. Sleep is a subject that has engaged the inquiries of poets and philosophers from the remotest periods of accredited history; but the limited state of our present knowledge has hitherto refused to gratify many questions, or desires, on this law of nature. Homer, indeed, represents sleep as a person, and ascribes a short part to him in his *Iliad*. The heathens made statues of him, placed him in their temples, and looked upon him as a real deity. None but the imagination of a Milton could have conceived our first father created with all the involuntary motions of circulation, &c. and he asleep on the ground in a fine perspiration, till he awoke and spake, as in book viii.—

"As new waked from soundest sleep,
Soft on the flow'ry herb I found me laid
In balmy sweat, which, with his beams,
the sun
Soon dried, and on the reeking moisture
fed,
Straight towards heaven my wond'ring
eyes I turn'd."

Although we are not sensible in sleep, of the great and many benefits resulting from that state, yet every day's ability for

business proclaims the goodness of our wise and merciful Creator in that ordinance; but, as there is no enjoyment but what is exposed to impediments and interruption, so it is with sleep; some are voluntary; the man of bustle and business, who will not allow himself time enough for repose, but robs himself of that salutary refreshment which was wisely appointed to fit him for his daily toil, and thus with unequal strength, loads and disquiets himself with cares and labours. Eccles. viii. 16, the wise man had observed such; "For also there is, that neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes," this was among the labours that had vanity attached to it; but other impediments are involuntary, as pain: a very small portion of this on the surface of the skin, or at the point of the finger, is sufficient to chase all sleep away; but how impossible is rest when pain rises to agony and torments the sufferer to the uttermost limit of human ability. Guilt of conscience is another hindrance to sleep; if the wretch, after nights of watching, overcome by the pressure of weariness, should chance to fall into a moment's slumber, dreams, the most terrific, supply the place of wakeful conscience, and haunt him to life again, trembling as a leaf agitated by a violent wind. Apprehensions of danger will prevent the eyes from the friendly aid of quiet darkness. The Assyrian monarch of old, feared that his dream was ominous; for it is recorded, Dan. ii. 1, "That his spirit was troubled, and his

sleep brake from him. But the most remarkable of all impediments, is insanity. The length of time that maniacs will remain sleepless, is wonderful. By this disease, the nervous system, the brain in particular, which is the root of all the nerves, seems to be kept in a state of diseased and incessant stimuli. Sleeplessness has been inflicted upon the martyrs of old by their heathen tormentors, to wring from them some expression like recantation, that in the last stages of rationality, nearly allied to lunacy, they might be seduced to say something, which their persecutors might construe and report to the disadvantage of their characters. The denial of sleep has been used with success to reduce the terrible spirit, and fury of the wildest beasts of prey brought from tropical deserts, where they basked, burning with exalted rage. It is frequently, during sleepless nights, or in uneasy sleep, that imperfect vision, and a wandering imagination, especially in ignorant persons, that supposititious images, or accidental noises, or the presence of some person not expected, have given rise to apparitions, falsely so called. It is to be regretted, that so few persons will take the trouble to rise and examine these marvellous cases. I cannot forbear to quote the famous story of De Thou, though it may be known to the more select and elegant class of readers: it occurred at Saumur, 1598. "One night having retired to rest very much fatigued, while he was enjoying

a sound sleep, he felt a very extraordinary weight upon his feet, which, having made him turn suddenly, fell down and awakened him. At first, he imagined that it had been only a dream, but hearing, soon after, some noise in his chamber, he drew aside the curtains and saw, by the help of the moon, which at that time shone very bright, a large white figure walking up and down, and, at the same time, observed upon a chair some rags, which he thought belonged to thieves, who had come to rob him. The figure then approaching his bed, he had the courage to ask what it was; "I am," said it, "the queen of Heaven!" Had such a figure appeared to any credulous ignorant man, in the dead of the night, and made such a speech, would he not have trembled with fear, and have frightened the whole neighbourhood with a marvellous description of it? But De Thou had too much understanding to be imposed upon. Upon hearing the words which dropped from the figure, he immediately concluded, that it was some mad woman; got up, and called his servants, and ordered them to turn her out of doors; after which, he returned to bed and fell asleep. Next morning he found that he had not been deceived in his conjecture, and having forgot to shut his door, this female figure had escaped from her keepers, and entered into his apartment. The brave Schomberg, to whom De Thou related this adventure some days after, confessed, that in such a case, he should not have

shown so much courage. The king, also, who was informed of it by Schomberg, made the same acknowledgment.

It may humble the mighty being, man, to be reminded, that, however great his power, his resources, and means, yet, his impotence and dependence are manifest in his inability to command natural sleep; behold, he who could command one hundred twenty and seven provinces, could not command a minute's sleep, Est. vi. 1.

The value of sleep ought to be estimated duly, that we may adore our beneficent Creator for so wise a constitution of things. We are taught, from the highest authority, that it is his blessing that makes the laws of nature faithful, and efficacious to our comfort through life, without which, sleep itself would cease to nourish us. It is worthy of admiration, that a few hours' repose and inactivity should be found sufficient to invigorate the body for new exercise: as if the past day had imposed no pain or weakness!

However the infidel may laugh at what follows, yet remote antiquity has, with inspired authority, taught us, that such is the absolute and total dependence of created being, upon the great First Cause, that after we have sunk helpless into the slumbers of rest, we should never wake any more, but for the visitation of God. Job, vii. 17, 18, "What is man, that thou shouldst magnify him? and that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him: and that thou shouldst visit (awake) *him every morning?*"

How much happier are angels, who do not want sleep, and therefore, have nearly twice the time to serve and delight in God. How high is our security in sleep, since he that "keepeth us neither slumbers nor sleeps." There is one sleep that awaits us, the softest, and most quiet of all,—death and the grave! and there will be a morning, when the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, shall call us from our beds, to rise and live for ever!

AWAKE.

ON DIVINE INFLUENCE.

To the Editors of the Baptist Magazine.

As the doctrine of divine influence is largely insisted on, and represented in a very important point of view in the sacred scriptures, as well as having been highly valued by the truly godly in every age, any thing on the subject calculated to assist our thoughts, and to guard against mistakes, will seldom fail to be acceptable or useful. On this ground, therefore, the following paper, written upwards of twenty years ago, may, perhaps, appear worthy a place in your excellent Magazine. The writer drew it up for his own use, and inserted it in his common-place book, in order to record his thoughts on the subject. It appears, therefore, in somewhat more of a mathematical form than would otherwise have been adopted for a periodical work.

Proposition.—That degree of the influence of God's Spirit granted to a sinner, in conver-

sion, does not infallibly secure him from all mistakes in principles or conduct.

Explanations.—1. The conversion of a sinner is the work of God's Spirit. This has been the general acknowledgment of the godly in all ages, and is the current language of scripture. See Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you: and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." John, iii. 5, "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

2. Such a degree of divine influence is imparted as infallibly preserves the subject of conversion from such errors as would prove fatal to him. If not, the end of God, in his conversion, would be frustrated, and all those texts of scripture which speak of the efficacy of grace, the perseverance, and the certain salvation of the regenerate be contradicted; such as, Jer. xxxii. 40, "I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me." Phil. i. 6, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it, until the day of Je-

sus Christ. John, iv. 14, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life."

3. Had it been the sovereign pleasure of God, he could have imparted such a measure of his spirit, as would have infallibly preserved every subject of converting grace from any the least deviation from truth and holiness; or, in other words, have made, and have kept him perfect in both. Of the truth of this, no one who believes the all-sufficiency of God, and who expects the perfection of saints in glory, can consistently doubt. But what we affirm is, that he has not seen fit to do so.

Proofs.—1. The confessions, complaints, and imperfections of saints, recorded in the Old and New Testaments, all of whom were unquestionably the partakers of divine influence; such as Noah, Abraham, David, Hezekiah, the Corinthians, Galatians, and primitive Christians, in general. Of the former, their is no need to cite particular texts, as the instances of their failings will recur to the recollection of every one acquainted with his Bible; of the last mentioned, the Apostle John makes this acknowledgment: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," 1 John, i. 8.

2, The directions, cautions, and reproofs addressed by the apostles to such as they considered as real Christians, and partakers of converting grace. These abound in all their epistles, written both to churches and individuals; but they would

have been wholly unnecessary, if it were impossible for such as are converted to do wrong.

3. The failings of the very apostles themselves, who were not only beyond all doubt truly converted, but, likewise, it may be safely presumed, possessed of a very large measure of the Spirit's influence. The ambition of James and John, and the denial of his Lord by Peter, during our Lord's abode with them, and the contention of Paul and Barnabas, and Peter's dissimulation at Antioch, after his removal from them, may be selected as instances.

4. The Apostle Paul not only acknowledges himself to be the subject of habitual remaining depravity, as in the latter part of the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, but also in the account he gives us of his visit to Paradise, 2 Cor. xii. 1—10, he informs us that his adorable Lord saw fit to send him the thorn in the flesh, even the messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure: It is manifest, then, that this holy man, even upon his return from the third heaven, at which time, it may be presumed, he was under the most eminent degree of divine influence, was still in danger of being exalted above measure by the very revelation itself.

Uses of the above.—1. No one ought to conclude, that all his principles and practices are right, because he thinks, and may have just reason to think, he has been, and continues to be, under the powerful influence of the Spirit of

God, but is still under indispensable obligations to examine them by the word of God, and compare them with it; and this obligation, instead of being impaired, is strengthened by whatever may be remarkable in his conversion, and tend to render the hand of God more visible, as these very circumstances render the temptations to pride and self-confidence so much the more powerful.

2. We should not hastily question the reality of the conversion of any, much less peremptorily deny that he is the subject of divine influence, because, we may perceive in him many things we conscientiously disapprove, of the criminality or impropriety of which he may, however, be insensible, and be even prejudiced against the very means of conviction.

3. We should not implicitly assent to the truth of what any one advances, or to the propriety of what he does, be he ever so positive in asserting the one and defending the other, though we have sufficient ground to conclude him to be truly converted to God, and to be, in the general, under an eminent degree of divine influence; but, on the contrary, should bring his opinions and practices to the test of the word of God.

4. Ministers should be particularly cautious in insisting on the doctrine of divine influence, lest they so represent it as to lead their hearers to conclude, that it supersedes the necessity of watchfulness, and a careful examination of their principles and practices in such as are the subjects of that influence; and,

in their conversation with young converts, they should labour to guard them against that presumption which would lead them to conclude, that if they have reason to think themselves converted, every principle or practice they may have adopted must therefore be right. They should endeavour, also, to point out to them what, in their experience, they ought to approve of and cherish, and what they should reject as unscriptural and corrupt; and, in dealing with such persons whose conversion may have been more than ordinarily remarkable, or whose natural tempers may be warm and precipitate, such labour becomes more particularly needful, as the temptation against which, it is the object of this paper to suggest a caution, would be proportionably more powerful and specious.

Bradford.

W.S.

PLAN FOR THE ERECTION

OF

NEW PLACES OF WORSHIP.

To the Editors of the Baptist Magazine.

I KNOW not whether you will think the subject of this communication of sufficient importance, or of a suitable nature, for insertion in your valuable *Theological Miscellany*; but it appears to me, that if the hint it contains should be adopted by patrons of seminaries and dissenting congregations, to any considerable extent, it would, under the divine blessing, greatly promote

the interests of religion and literature; however, I shall be perfectly satisfied with your determination respecting it.

I am aware, that the good proposed, however certain, is too remote to influence some minds, and that others will think we are too far advanced in the world's age to justify schemes which stretch to so distant a period; but, as the bulk of your readers profess to be powerfully affected by unseen and distant realities, I trust they will not pass this paper over without serious consideration.

We all rejoice at the increase of places of worship where the gospel is dispensed, though we sometimes think the applications for money on that account rather too numerous. May not this be, ultimately, in a great measure obviated?

What I wish to suggest and propose is, that every congregation, on being settled in a place of worship, raise a sum of money for the purpose of accumulation by compound interest: this sum should be according to the size of the place and congregation. I suppose, for brief illustration of my idea, a congregation to erect a noble edifice, which may cost them 10,000*l.* or somewhat more: let us suppose this building may want replacing by a new one in about one hundred years; I say, it would be generous, if not the duty, of such a congregation, to provide a fund for this purpose; and it may be done with a trifling sacrifice; for, by devoting 100*l.* to this laudable design, at the expiration of ninety-eight years, 12,800*l.* would be

actually ready for the sacred services of the sanctuary! In like manner, to give an example upon a smaller scale, 20*l.* would produce, in the same time, 2560*l.* Had the idea occurred to our venerable ancestors, I have no doubt they would have adopted it, in which case, we should now be heirs to a glorious inheritance; but, as I think there is scarcely one of your readers who would not be willing to do that for a future generation which he wishes had been done for the present, in connection with the cause of God and truth, I do hope that the idea may now be adopted.

The reader is, perhaps, by this time ready to suggest his doubts, difficulties, and subtractions. I would notice what I anticipate, but fear to trespass on your indulgence. Allow me only to express my conviction, that, should the subject be worthy of consideration, all doubts will be easily solved, all difficulties easily surmounted; and that very little, if any, subtractions need be made from the above statement.

J. P.

ON THE BIBLE.

HENRY VIII. made a law, that all men might read the Scriptures, except servants; but no woman, except ladies and gentlewomen who had leisure and might ask somebody the meaning. This law was repealed in *Edward the Sixth's* days.

SELDEN.

Juvenile Department.

CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY 1816.

I. *The Name* is derived from *Februa*, an epithet given to Juno, as the goddess of purification.—Shakspeare says, in allusion to the character of this month,

“ You have such a *February* face,

“ Full of frost, of storm, and cloudiness.”

II. *Fasts and festivals.* Feb. 2. Purification of the blessed Virgin Mary. This festival is of high antiquity; and the ancient Christians observed it by using a great number of lights; in remembrance, as it is supposed, of our Saviour's being declared, by Simeon, to be “ a light to lighten the Gentiles;” hence the name of *Candlemas-day*.—(*Time's Telescope*.)

Feb. 14. *St. Valentine*.—Valentine was an ancient presbyter of the church. He suffered martyrdom in the persecution under Claudius II. at Rome, about A.D. 270.

Feb. 27. *Shrove Tuesday*.—*Shrove* is the preterite of *shrive*, an antiquated word, which signifies to hear or make confession. On this day, it was usual for the people to *confess*, that they might be the better prepared for the observation of the ensuing season of penitence, and for receiving the sacrament at Easter.

Feb. 28. *Ash Wednesday*.—Lent is not of apostolic institution; nor was it known in the earlier ages of the Christian church. The day was formerly called *Caput jejunii*, the head of the

fast; and *Dies cinerum*, or Ash Wednesday. Till the late revolution in France, it was customary, in the church of Notre Dame, at Paris, and in other cathedral churches, for notorious offenders, sometimes, with ropes round their necks, to do public penance on this day. After which, they were driven out of the church, and re-admitted to communion on Holy Thursday.—(*Shepherd*.)

III. *Astronomical Occurrences.* The sun enters Pisces at 54 minutes past four in the afternoon of the 19th. The moon enters her first quarter on the 6th. Full, 13th. Last quarter, 20th. New moon, 28th.

The beautiful planet, Venus, continues to gild our mornings during the whole of this month. She may be sometimes seen after the sun is risen, if her course is carefully watched as she ushers in the day. The planet Mars will appear conspicuous during the whole of the evening. He comes to the south about five o'clock in the afternoon; and is, at that time, about as high in the heavens as the sun is at twelve o'clock in the month of May.—The planet Jupiter may be seen early in the morning; and comes to the south about break of day. Both Jupiter and Venus appear at that time; but Venus is a brighter planet than Jupiter, and is more towards the east.—On Tuesday, the 20th of this month, one of the fixed stars will pass behind the moon, early in the morning. At 39 minutes after three, it will go behind the bright side of the moon; and, at 52 minutes

after four, it will come out from behind the dark part. This re-appearance will be instantaneous. The star's name is *Beta Virginis*; and it is of the third magnitude.

IV. *Naturalist's Diary*.—God renews the face of the earth.—About the 4th or 5th, the wood-lark, (*alauda arborea*,) one of our earliest and sweetest songsters, renews his note. A week after, rooks begin to pair, and geese to lay; the thrush sings; the yellow-hammer and the chaffinch are heard. Turkey-cocks strut and gobble. Partridges begin to pair; the house pigeon has young; field crickets open their holes; missel-thrushes couple; and wood-owls hoot. Gnats play about, and insects swarm under sunny hedges. Frogs croak, and the stone curlew clamours.—By the latter end of this month, the raven has generally laid its eggs, and begun to sit. Moles commence their subterranean operations.

The flowers of the crocus appear, before their leaves are grown to their full length. The barren strawberry, the laurustinus, and the yew-tree, are in flower. The elder-tree begins to put forth its flower-buds; and the catkins of the hazel are very conspicuous in the hedges. The gooseberry-bush, and the red currant, show their young leaves about the end of this month.

About the middle of this month, we shall have an opportunity of observing the pleasing symptoms of approaching spring, in some of the early wild flowers. Among others, the following will begin to unfold themselves. The *less periwinkle*, the *common daisy*, (*bellis perennis*,) the *snowdrop*, the *coltsfoot*, the *chickweed*, (*alsine media*,) the *red archangel*, or *deadnettle*, the *shepherd's purse*, and the *common whitlow grass*.—The coltsfoot is in flower before

the leaves appear. The flowers are a little like those of the dandelion, but appear far more beautiful when closely examined. The shepherd's purse has a white flower; and, afterwards, has seed-vessels in the form of a heart.—The whitlow grass is a very small plant growing on walls. It has white flowers, and, by this circumstance, may be readily distinguished from the mosses, among which it often grows.—In the garden, the *crocus* will appear, arrayed in all its splendour; and the blue or purple flowers of the *noble liverwort*, or *hepatica*, will also attract attention.

The husbandman is now eager to commence the work of ploughing; which important business is finished in this month, if the weather permit. Early potatoes are set, hedges repaired, trees lopped, and wet lands drained. Poplars, willows, osiers, and other aquatics, are planted. Pheasant shooting usually terminates about the 1st, and partridge shooting about the 15th, of this month.

V. *Remarkable Events*.—Feb. 3, 1660, General Monk entered London with his army.

Feb. 13, 1680, William III. began to reign. This Prince of Orange was born in 1650, created stadtholder in 1672, and married to the princess Mary of England (daughter of James II.) in 1677. He landed at Torbay, in Nov. 1688, and was declared king of England in Feb. 1689. *The Revolution* altered the line of succession, by a power immediately derived from the people. That the crown should never more be possessed by a papist, was an important declaration, made by the *bill of rights*. William III. reigned 13 years, and died, 1701, aged 52.

Feb. 16, 615, Dagobert I. king of France, died.—He built the once noble abbey of St. Denis,

and is said to have robbed the finest churches in France of their ornaments, to embellish this favourite edifice.

VI. *Births and Deaths of Illustrious Men.*—Feb. 4. 1555.

John Hooper, bishop of Gloucester, burnt in that city.

Feb. 6, 1685. Charles II, died at Whitehall

Feb. 7, 1587. Mary, queen of Scots, beheaded at Fotheringay.

Feb. 9, 1700. Daniel Bernouilli born, at Groningen.

Feb. 10, 1793. The French entered Rome.

Feb 13, 1732. Francis Atterbury, bishop of Rochester, died in exile, at Paris.

Feb. 14, 1779. Captain Cook killed at Owyhee.

Feb. 19, 1472. Copernicus born.

Feb. 22, 1797. Twelve hundred French troops landed at Fiskard-bay, Pembrokeshire.

Feb. 23, 1792. Died, Sir Joshua Reynolds, a very eminent painter.

VII. *Reflections.*—How prone are men to regard, as religious appointments, rites and ceremonies which are merely of human contrivance; to “observe days, and months, and times, and years!” How wonderfully exact are the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, each of which “declares the glory of God;” and “shews forth his handy-work?” How much of the wisdom of God may be seen in the works of nature! How wonderful art thou in thy works, in wisdom hast “thou made them all.” How few of the events of time are recorded, and how very few of the inhabitants of the world have had their names enrolled in the catalogue of the great! Let the reader seek for “desirable riches and righteousness”—“for glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life.”

PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS.

No. II.

OF MATTER.

FEW words are more frequently employed, and, perhaps, less understood than *matter*. It is used in a philosophical sense, and it is not our present business to dwell upon any other of its significations. The gradations of being are comparatively endless, and the variety of substances innumerable, yet all are included in this general term; for philosophers consider matter as the general name of every thing that acts upon our senses. Let the young reader reflect on this comprehensive definition.

To every species of matter, hitherto observed, the following properties have been found to belong; solidity, divisibility, mobility, and inertness: nor can any one say but it may possess properties which our imperfect powers have not yet discovered. We may sometimes please ourselves with our knowledge of infinite Wisdom, and think it considerable, but discoveries are perpetually making, and no doubt will continue to be made, till it shall be announced, that the end of all things is at hand; then shall the perfections of God be displayed indeed, and we know what it hath not entered into the heart of man before to conceive.

By solidity is here meant, that property which every body possesses, of not allowing any other substance to occupy the same place with it at the same time;—a property so obvious, that it needs but to be mentioned to be understood. The reader would think it a reflection on his understanding, if I attempted to convince him, that before my own

body could occupy the chair in which he is now sitting, or the place in which he is now standing, he himself must remove; and so of smaller bodies, or particles of matter, however minute. If all sorts of matter were visible, the acknowledgment of this general property would be easy; but, as some kinds are invisible, being transparent, as the air we breathe, it is necessary distinctly to consider, that fluids have also this property. It is not possible to thrust into a tube, closed at one end, and filled with water, a piece of wood that should accurately fit it, without first emptying it of the water; and when we come, in a future paper, to reflect upon the nature of air, it will be seen that even air, when confined within certain limits, is equally solid with the hardest stone.

Divisibility is the property by which the parts of matter may be separated from each other. Nor let this circumstance, however obvious, be too lightly treated. We can take a body of a certain magnitude, and divide it into more parts than we have patience or ability to enumerate; yea, till our sight will fail us to proceed; we may then, by the aid of glasses, carry on the division, and continue to gratify our curiosity, in proportion to the powers of the lenses employed; but, after all, we must pause, and acknowledge the imperfection of our faculties, and the unsearchable wisdom and power of our great Creator! To what extent this divisibility may be carried, no philosopher has yet been able to discover; whether to infinity, as some contend, or whether we should at length arrive at ultimate atoms, as others suppose, remains among the difficulties which, in this state, may never be

known. The Christian philosopher finds mysteries in nature, as well as in providence and grace, which the boasted reason of infidelity in vain attempts to explore. This characteristic of matter affords the most striking proofs of an Almighty Hand! Gold is of such a nature, that one grain of it can be hammered to such a degree of fineness, that the two millionth part of it can be seen by the naked eye. There are living creatures, completely organised, so minute, that thousands of them may stand on the point of a needle: for, let it be remembered, the point of a needle, when viewed through a microscope, is far from fine or sharp. Let him who doubts these facts, instead of sleeping away the most beautiful part of the day, or idling away the most social part of it, examine for himself. It has been sometimes said, to the disparagement of religion, that it curtails our pleasures, and allows of no amusements; this is one of those libels that observation would soon falsify. Last evening, I beheld a family seated around a table, amusing themselves with decorated paper, called cards. I observed the best powers of immortal minds called into exercise, in connection with the worst passions of our nature, avarice, envy, jealousy, &c. the soul not once elevated to Him who gave it. This evening, I am more happy. I see a domestic circle far otherwise employed. They are now seated round the microscope, beholding with wonder and admiration, the otherwise concealed beauties, and even existence of various animalculæ: Satisfaction beams on every countenance, and to-morrow they will have this gratification, that their employment was rational, because useful.

But I proceed to mobility, which is that property, by which we are enabled to move matter from one part of space to another. It is as universal as either of those already mentioned. It is true, there are substances so huge and weighty, that we, hyperbolically, denominate immoveable; but this arises from our inability to apply an adequate force. The application of the mechanical powers has effected much.

Inertness, or inactivity, is that characteristic of matter, by which it would ever continue in the state of rest or motion in which it is put, unless prevented by some external force. That matter can put itself in motion, no one will imagine; but, that it would never stop, when once set in motion, is not so self-evident. We have heard much of perpetual motion, but have never seen any thing like it; because all the motions, with which we are acquainted, are obstructed, and, finally, destroyed, by the resistance of the air and friction. In proportion as these are diminished, the motion of the body is prolonged; and, could they be entirely removed, the motion would be uniform and perpetual. A variety of illustrations and examples might be adduced in proof of these remarks; but, it is presumed, the thoughtful mind will soon supply them.

Too much depends on each of these properties, to admit of our ascribing them to the effects of what is irreligiously and ignorantly called *chance*. Who, but a Being, excellent in wisdom, and wonderful in working, could have adjusted, with such transcendent skill, the very elements of creation, and, out of chaos, commanded such untold beauties to arise? Oh, my soul! trifle no longer. How much is there to learn!

N. N.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE UNITED.

THE following is an extract from a sermon by Mr. Flavel, preached at the public thanksgiving, February 14, 1688-9, for England's deliverance from popery, &c. It is entitled "Mount Pisgah." Some efforts which are now making for the promotion of Christian knowledge in France will give it great interest:

"Liberty to serve the Lord without fear, liberty without a snare or hook in it, and a well-settled durable liberty, for such is that we may now (if ever) promise ourselves; what soul can dilate itself wide enough, to take in the adequate sense of such a mercy? We were glad of liberty from our enemies, when we sought it not; we peaceably and thankfully improved it, though just fears and jealousies much darkened the lustre of it: but the Lord, in this dispensation of his providence will, I hope, so establish the just liberties of his people, that it shall never be in the power of violent and wicked men any more to oppress them. There was a time when the witnesses of Christ lay dead, and their enemies rejoiced over them; the Lord hath begun to revive them, and the time (I trust) even the appointed time, is at hand, when they shall hear a great voice from heaven (*jussu Supremi Magistratus*, saith learned Mede) saying, 'Come up hither; and both England and France shall rejoice together in their spiritual as well as civil liberties and mercies.' What soul that loves Jesus Christ in sincerity doth not feel itself cheered and raised in proportion to the hopes and evidences it hath of the approach of so great and desirable a mercy?"

Obituary.

WILLIAM HAMMOND,

DIED AT RAYLEIGH, ESSEX,

October 17, 1815.

HAVING been vitally united to the living head of the church, he sought, and obtained, a name and a place among the living members. Though mean in his own esteem, his humble, grave deportment, his activity in every good work, endeared him to the whole church. To diligence in business he added fervency of spirit, alike removed from legality and licentiousness, he kept the narrow way. While he heartily embraced the glorious gospel, with all its rich, free, unbounded blessings, he acknowledged his obligation to Christ as the only king and lawgiver in Zion. To the well-being of the whole, he contributed his part, according to the measure of grace he had received. During the last year, his health was declining, but his soul was evidently ripening for glory. Having attended him through the last painful affliction, I am enabled to speak what I know, and testify what I have seen.

A severe rheumatism, and asthmatic cough, rendered him so feeble, that with difficulty he followed his daily calling. Wishing to live honestly, he exerted himself beyond his strength; till a copious spitting of blood threatened a speedy dissolution: but he obtained relief for a few days; when he was siezed with an alarming spasmodic asthma. Phlebotomy and blisters gave momentary relief: he breathed better, and was assured, that, although it was an alarming dis-

order, it was not dangerous. This he could not believe; therefore he endeavoured to set his house in order.

He discovered a deep concern for himself that he might be favoured with the witness of the Holy Spirit that he was in Christ;—for his wife, that she might be supported and provided for,—and, for a just payment of his debts.

Having been married only a year, and begun business with only a few shillings, he was fearful that the expense of the affliction would run him in debt; for, said he, “If it had not been for this, I should have been clear of every one by Christmas.”

The affectionate assurances of Christian friends allayed his fears on that subject; and afforded him every attention in their power.

By the frequency of the attacks, and loss of blood, he was rendered so weak as to keep his bed.

He said, “Oh how good is God to me! He spared me when I was a vile blasphemer; and led me about in his kind providence to this place; where he brought me to know him, and placed me in the midst of so many kind friends, where I have every attention, and every comfort I need,—Blessed be the Lord!”

Prayer was made for him continually; and although it did not please God to spare his life, he imparted such an abundant measure of his grace, to his afflicted servant, as enabled him to joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

For nearly a year, he had been sorely tempted to destroy himself, and once was awakened in a

dreadful agony by the fiery darts of the enemy; but, when it pleased God to bring him into this last trial, he rebuked the tempter; removed all gloomy doubts from his mind, and enabled him to say, "I have no doubts; I long to depart; my afflicted wife, and all my cares, I leave in the hand of my gracious God;" and added, "I shall soon see dear sister N. and brother G. and sister G. (members of the church who had died this year) and there I shall see my dear Lord!" I rejoined, "Yes, my dear brother, you will soon be delivered from the cares of this world—from an afflicted body; and from a body of sin and death!" Lifting his feeble hands and languid eyes, with peculiar energy, he showed, that a perfect freedom from sin,—a perfect conformity to God, was the consummation of his happiness.

Three days before he died he sent for me and another brother. He appeared drawing near his end; and being too weak to endure two persons at once in the room, brother Q. went to him first, to whom he said, "My dear brother, I want you to take my books, and take an account of the work that has been done, since I have been confined; also to make out the bills, and get the money for me. I hope, if there should not be money enough to pay every one to the full, that my brethren will think favourably of me, as it is the affliction that has increased my expense."

Understanding that a lad, who had worked for him, was in the house, he said, "Joseph, you know I often admonished you not to neglect attending a place of worship,—it is your father's wish also. I now, as a dying man, for the last time, give you the same advice." He paused,—then charged

Joseph to tell his master, that he had often warned him of the danger of neglecting the means, and he charged him to tell him, that he did it now, for the last time. His weeping wife and friends were on the stairs within hearing.

When I came to his bed side, he took hold of my hand, and said, "I have sent for you, my dear pastor, to speak a few comfortable truths to me, and then commit me into the hand of God." This was rather too much for my nerves to bear. Having spoken a few minutes, he raised his hands; and, in a deliberate, lucid strain, spoke of the special grace of God to him, in calling him from darkness to light, and to the fellowship of the saints—of his own conduct as a member of the church—of his own unworthiness; and closed with a fervent expression of his entire dependence upon the full, finished salvation of Christ Jesus, as the only ground of his hope.

At his desire, his wife, and all who were in the house, came within hearing, when I kneeled down, and commended his soul and all his affairs into the hands of our covenant God. But his work was not done. The next evening, about eleven o'clock, I went to see him, heard him groaning and calling out, "O Lord, help me! Oh how good is the Lord to me! I begged he would send one of his servants to help me; and he sent you in the time of my need." After many blessings for a trifling service, I left him, and he had a comfortable night.

The day before he died, a young man (who had withdrawn from the church, with many others, because *I did not preach the gospel*) called upon him. To whom he said, "Friend, you now

see me a dying man; you once told me that the doctrine I heard would lead me and my pastor to hell,—What do you think now?" "Why," said the young man, "if I must speak, I do not believe your pastor does preach the gospel." To which, as well as expiring nature would enable him, he replied (with holy firmness)—"Do you think if it were *not* the gospel it would support me now?—My whole dependence is upon the Lord Jesus; I feel him now precious to me, 'though heart and flesh are failing, he is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.'"

To the doctor he said, "Tell me, sir, if you think me a dying man; do not be afraid to tell me the truth; I am not afraid of death, I know there is laid up for me, a crown of glory."

Having taken a composing draught, his wife begged him to try to sleep. He said, "My dear, I told you before not to weep; I do not believe I shall ever sleep again in this world!"—Accordingly, on the next morning, he calmly fell asleep, in the full assurance of eternal glory, aged 31 years.

On the Lord's day following, devout men carried him to the grave. The pall was supported by the committee of the Sunday-school of which he was a teacher, and the corpse was followed by relatives, the church, and children of the Sunday-school.

After a solemn address to a numerous assembly at the grave, we sung "Absent from flesh, blissful thought," &c. I preached a funeral discourse from 2 Tim. iv. 6—8, to an overflowing house.

While we discharged the last offices of love to our brother, the wants of the widow were not neglected.

Having witnessed the awful shipwreck of many a vain professor, who carried more sail than the deceased, I am the more rejoiced, to behold a feeble bark safely moored, within the haven of eternal repose. J. PILKINTON.

Mr. EDWARD EVANS, aged 81,
Deacon of the Church at Shrewsbury;
Mr. THOMAS EVANS, aged 40,

AND

Mrs. MARY EVANS, aged 102.

To the Editors of the Baptist Magazine.

ON the 17th of November, 1815, died, at Knocking, Shropshire, Mrs. Mary Evans, in her 102d year. As a brief account of this venerable widow *indeed*, her valuable husband, and their son, may give pleasure to your readers, I transmit it to you for insertion.

Salop. J. PALMER.

Mr. Edward Evans was a native of North Wales, and was greatly respected for his sobriety and integrity. Coming into Shropshire, he married the widow of Mr. Bates, a respectable farmer, who resided at Kinton, by whom he had several children. Some years after their marriage, it pleased God to afflict him with a fever; on his recovery from which, he went to his parish church, to thank God for his unexpected restoration! Some of his neighbours brought a child, to do for it after the custom of the national establishment. His pew was near the font. He heard all that was read and promised, with new ears; and, to use his own words, "was, at the same time, convinced of his lost estate as a sinner; and, that what he then saw practised had not any foundation in the scriptures, which it had been

long his practice to read with much attention." He was, for a considerable time, under great distress of mind, as was also his wife. At length, he heard a sermon, preached by a person who called himself a follower of the late Mr. Cudworth. Under this sermon his soul was set at liberty; and, as there was preaching, and a society of those people, not very distant from his own house, he cordially united with them; but soon found, to the grief of his soul, that many of them were rather "hearers than doers of the word." He mourned the want of family piety and vital godliness that was amongst them; admonishing, reproving, and exhorting them, when he had opportunity; but was told, he was young in the ways of God, ignorant, and legal. At length, he told the church, when assembled, his fears and griefs, adding, "If you do not begin and keep up family prayer in your houses, abstain from sin, and walk more according to the gospel, I must, I will, leave you; for, 'as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.'" He left them, and went in quest of the gospel. He found it at Shrewsbury. To this place he came himself, and brought as many of his family as he could, (a distance of nine miles,) most Lord's days. The new meeting-house being finished, he and his dear wife were the two first who were baptized in it, by Mr. Sandys. This was on November 5, 1780. They joined the church, and some of their children followed their example. He established preaching in his house at Kinton, for which cause he suffered reproach and loss, and, at last, gave up the farm, on which his wife's family had resided for 200 years! because he was not allowed to

continue to have preaching there. In March, 1795, he removed to a farm, called Alcaston, in the parish of Acton Scot, 19 miles on the other side of Shrewsbury. Here he immediately opened his house for preaching, and invited the neighbours all around to come and hear for themselves; he was neither afraid nor ashamed of the cross; and both he, his wife, and son, greatly adorned the doctrine of God their Saviour. The farm had been badly managed before they came to it, and it cost them much labour and money, as well as time, before it could be made to answer. Their difficulties, losses, and trials, were many; but the word of the Lord, and the covenant of his grace, were their support. *Religion* was not neglected. I went, for many years, and preached, once a month, in their large parlour. At times, we have had nearly 200 hearers. To some of these, the gospel was made effectual. Two persons I baptized in a river on the farm; and two others from Alcaston, whom I baptized in Shrewsbury. All these had been in the employ of Mr. Evans. We frequently broke bread there, and, at times, have had from 10 to 20 communicants. Our church chose Mr. Evans to the office of deacon; and he was set apart with prayer, imposition of hands, &c. April 19, 1796, (being the same day that I was ordained as pastor.) Seldom has a deacon and his wife accorded more exactly with what is said in Paul's 1st Epistle to Timothy, chap. iii. from the 8th to the 14th verse; nor is it easy to give a just idea of the simplicity and godly sincerity of this pious aged couple. Often have I heard him reading the scriptures, and earnestly praying with his servants, between three and four o'clock in the

morning, when they had to go out to plough. He used to tell both them and me, that "not a servant should go over the threshold of his door, before they had bent their knees unto the Lord." After breakfast, it was his custom to call all together, that were near the house, to worship God. In the evening, reading, prayer, and praise, were repeated, with and for the family; and when he and his dear aged partner entered their bed-chamber, they again bent the knee, and called upon God.— Sometimes I have hearkened until my heart has melted, my eyes run down with tears, and my soul been elevated to God. Such earnest pleadings with God (for a blessing on the word and ordinances, on churches and pastors, on the whole Israel of God, and for the conversion and salvation of men) seldom proceeds from the heart and lips of even the godly. It was seldom he took a meal of food without having the Bible by him, and never without imploring a blessing, and giving thanks; and often, while others were eating at his table, he would read and expound the word of God to them, and weep over those he feared did not know the Lord. He was clear and well established in the doctrines of grace and the ordinances of the gospel; but manifested great love to all the saints, and was much beloved by them. His zeal, at times, was so great, that many would have thought he went rather too far, in reproving, exhorting, cautioning, and instructing others; but there were such openness, affection, and godly simplicity, in what he did and said, that I have never known him give offence; for all said, "he is what he appears to be."— Whenever he came amongst us, and took the lead in prayer and

praise, our hearts, as a church, rejoiced, our spirits were refreshed; and, if ever the people were waiting for the preacher to arrive, either at his own house or in other places, he endeavoured to redeem and improve the time, by prayer, reading, and expounding the word of God. One instance of this sort was as follows: He was informed, that Mr. F. a clergyman in the established church, was awakened, and preached in a way very different to his neighbours; and that he preached, once a month, in a small chapel, about three miles from Alcaston. There the good old man went, with a warm heart. The bell tolled; the people assembled; but the minister did not come. After waiting some time, Mr. Evans, perceiving there was a large Bible on the desk, went and opened it, and thus addressed the congregation:—"My dear friends, here is an excellent Bible; and we may well employ the time, till the minister comes, by reading a portion of the blessed word of God. I shall read to you part of the Epistle to the Ephesians, and make a few remarks upon it."—He then began, read, and expounded, the whole of that epistle; the assembly were all attention. When he came to the close, he said—"I suppose Mr. F. will not come now; and, as it is growing late, I think we had better be going home."—So saying, he closed the book, and left the desk; when some in the congregation said—"But, Master Evans, will you pray with us before we part?" He replied, "Yes, I will." Kneeling down by the communion rails, and the congregation kneeling also, he poured out his heart in fervent prayer for them.—Hearing of this, I requested he would not do so again; as,

I feared, if it reached the ears of the dignitaries of the church, Mr. F. the minister, may come into trouble.

He was, in person, one of the finest old men I ever beheld; about six feet high, robust, a clear skin, fresh colour, lively blue eyes; the most perfect symmetry in his features; silver hair, parted in front; and his venerable locks falling on his well-formed shoulders; a countenance, open as mid-day, and mild as a summer evening; while he stood erect, at the age of eighty, as a man in the bloom of youth, it was impossible to see, and not venerate; to know, and not love him. But, beautiful as that body was, which had been a temple for God, the time drew nigh, when the earthly tabernacle was to be dissolved. He had, first, an affection of the lungs, attended with a violent cough; then of the liver, which terminated in dropsy and death. A short time before his dissolution, I was preaching, as usual, at the house, when we attended to the supper ordinance. On our being seated at the table, he said, "With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you, before I depart." *It was, indeed, a night much to be remembered!*—After this, he grew weaker, but continued to pray with, and for, all around him; and exhorted them, with purpose of heart, to cleave to the Lord.—On the day he died, he sung, most sweetly,

"And when this lisping, stammering tongue

Lies silent in the grave,

Then, in a nobler, sweeter song,

I'll sing thy power to save."

At times, he was rather delirious; but was not ever permitted to speak unadvisedly with his lips. He dozed, and would often

awake, uttering these words:—*"Salvation is of grace; it is all of grace."* Then, looking steadfastly on all around, he said, "*Mind, I SAY, salvation is of the Lord;*" and so he sweetly fell asleep, June the 13th, 1801, in the 81st year of his age. His remains were interred at Acton Scot. I attended his funeral, and preached to a large and deeply-affected auditory.

In about sixteen months after the death of Mr. Evans, his son, Mr. Thomas Evans, was removed by death also, leaving a widow and two children. He was a man of blameless life, of genuine piety, and great meekness. In his death, the church lost a valuable member, his wife a tender and faithful husband, and his children a kind and godly parent. His illness was short, but his sufferings great.—He was taken with a pain in one of his teeth. It was thought best, by his medical attendants, to extract the tooth. The attempt produced inflammation, which was followed by fever, the formation of matter, delirium, and death. On the Wednesday before his dissolution, I preached at the house, from John, viii. 51, "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." After sermon, he addressed me as follows:—"My dear brother, I have sat up in bed, and not had one pain all the while you have been preaching. I heard every word; and the Lord sent you to deliver every word for me. I never had such a season. Blessed be his holy name, I do believe on Christ, and 'I shall not taste of death.'"—Indeed, he appeared ripe for glory.—On the morrow, I left him rather better; but, on the Saturday night, his delirium came on, and he expired on Lord's day evening, Oct. 17, 1802,

in the 40th year of his age. He was interred by the side of his venerable father. None felt the stroke more sensibly than his mother; for he was the son of her old age; and his piety, and dutiful and affectionate conduct, had greatly endeared him to her.

The dear old lady had, for some time, been too feeble to take an active part in the family; but, her sight being continued, she generally, for years, spent at least six hours every day, in reading the scriptures and prayer. In these exercises, she sought retirement and communion with God, and often forgot the hour of dinner or tea until some of the family would remind her of it, to whom she has frequently said, "This is very naughty and cruel of you now to interrupt my communion with God, and disturb me while reading his blessed word; I was so happy, and you could not leave me alone; I am sure I have been but a bit;" when she had actually been thus engaged for at least four hours. About three years after, she left Alcaston, and went to reside with her other children at Oswestry, and Knocking. At length her strength failed her, so that she could not attend upon the means of grace, and her sight, that she could not read; but "*her heart was fixed*," and the remnant of her days were spent in praise and prayer. Her children were kind and attentive to her, for which she thanked both God and them; for several years she was wholly with her daughter, Mrs. Vaughan, of Knocking, twelve miles from Shrewsbury. Here I called to see her twice the last summer. These visits afforded me *pleasure and instruction*. On entering the room, and asking her how she was, she replied, "I do not know you." 'No,' said I,

'I think you do,'—"But I am grown almost dark, and cannot see"—'But you can hear?'—"Yes, and I think I know your voice, is it Mr. P.?" 'Yes,' "I am glad to see you; but I am so old, I know nothing of the people, nor what they be about; nor do I want to know."—"Well, you know one thing?"—"What is that?"—"That you are a sinner." "Oh, I do; I am nothing but a mass of sin and corruption." "And you know another thing, *That Christ is a Saviour*?" "Oh yes, blessed, sweet, sweet, dear, sweet Jesus! Oh his love, why he died for us! here is love. He died for us all, did he?" 'Yes, for all that *believe on him, I mean*; and do you believe on him?" "Oh yes, I do, blessed, sweet Jesus!" "And how came you to believe on him?" "Why, he enabled me, to be sure; we can do nothing of ourselves; it is all of grace."—"What do you do now you cannot read?" "My grandson reads for me."—"And does the Lord comfort your heart?" "Oh yes, sweet Jesus, he is *with me*, he will not *leave me*. Oh his *love*? I long to be with *him*; but I must not be impatient; I must not grieve my dear sweet Lord, but I must wait his time, sweet Jesus!" She desired her love to the church; and I left her rejoicing, that I had seen one of the Lord's right-hand planting bearing such rich fruit in her 102d year: fruits of humility, gratitude, faith, hope, love, and patience; surely, thought I, "God is her rock, and there is no changing in him." On the 17th of November, she sweetly fell asleep in Jesus. I endeavoured to improve the event by preaching on Job, v. 26, "Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in, in his season."

Review.

Thirty-four Sermons, on the most interesting Doctrines of the Gospel, by that eminently great Divine and Reformer, Martin Luther: to which are prefixed, Memoirs of his Life, by Philip Melancthon; &c.

THE reformation from popery, in which Luther acted so pre-eminent a part, will ever be regarded, by enlightened and pious men, as an event of the highest order, whose results have promoted the felicity of man, and the glory of a righteous and holy God.

Waldus, Wickliffe, Huss, and Jerome, of Prague, employed all the faculties and energies they possessed in attempting to oppose and extirpate the pernicious heresies of Rome. From this infamous church, as if it were a mountain set on fire of hell, proceeded a stream of burning lava that was desolating the earth, against which these heroes struggled in vain. But the Author and Patron of truth and righteousness raised up Martin Luther and Philip Melancthon, and the Roman pontiff trembled on his throne! Protected and succeeded by the hand of God, these great and holy men, with their several coadjutors, attacked the popish beast, and inflicted a wound, under the effects of which the brute has ever since languished, and will, we trust, at no distant period, expire. When a naval or military hero obtains victories that confer lasting and substantial benefits on nations, and in which eminent skill and bravery were displayed, we are happy to possess and eager to peruse accounts of their origin, education, early

indications of future eminence, gradual advances to power and command, first achievements, and mature exertions and success. Let us do justice to the men of God, who, whatever be their fate on earth, will, in heaven, be had in eternal remembrance. The work before us consists of two parts, the first of which is, Memoirs of Luther, chiefly written by Melancthon.

These relations give a clear view of Luther's studies, acquisitions, and state of mind previously to the proclamations of Tetzl respecting the efficacy of the popish indulgences; of the holy indignation with which our reformer regarded this conduct of the Dominican, and the immediate efforts he used to counteract the mischief. Here we behold Luther submissive to the constituted authorities, as far as the commands of heaven would permit; prudent in the midst of astonishing provocations and difficulties, and all the while possessed of peculiar ardour. He stands before us a minister of the word of life; and we are delighted to view the torch of truth in the hand of piety, which gives additional efficacy to its holy light. Here we are introduced to a man of apostolic spirit, so ardently attached to truth as to rise superior to every danger in her defence and propagation, who, engaged in the cause of God, feared neither monarchs, priests, cardinals, popes, the angels, nor the prince of darkness. A man who attained the highest honours, possessed the most extensive influence, had

very great opportunities of amassing riches, and died poor.

The memoirs are not long, but are full and satisfactory, and may be regarded as a recital of the leading events of the Reformation, and the life of the reformer. They are principally indebted to Robertson's Charles V, Roscoe's Leo X, Bower's Life of Luther, Milner's Church History, and Cox's Life of Melancthon. We would recommend the perusal of Melancthon's life in connection with the work before us. Mr. Cox has deserved well of mankind for so fine and accurate a picture of one of its greatest benefactors. Here are admirably represented the early life, amiable temper, extensive erudition, learned labours, and well-merited, extensive, and solid fame of this extraordinary man. But, above all, we were charmed with the picture of his piety. Here we learn that Melancthon was greatly distinguished by fidelity, humility, mildness, frankness, benevolence, almost unexampled liberality, and unwearied diligence in the work of the Lord. He was candid, disinterested, unostentatious, and an example of suffering affliction and patience. Mr. Cox's work abounds also with important notices of eminent persons, who, in different countries, were correspondents and fellow labourers with Melancthon; nor does it fail to present a striking view of the ignorance, superstition, lying wonders, and general deception, profligacy, tyranny, and cruelty of the corrupt church of Rome. Luther and Melancthon are well described as to the wonderful suitability of their characters, tempers, talents, and acquirements for co-operation in the glorious work of emancipating nations from the pestilential in-

fluence of the papal church. The work of Mr. Cox evinces great research, is elegantly written, and well deserves a place in every library. Both these works are accompanied with excellent engravings, full-length portraits of the two illustrious men whose lives they contain.

The sermons, which form the second part of the volume now on our table, are truly evangelical, abounding with ingenious remarks and explanations of scripture; they are written with considerable energy and vivacity, and have a holy tendency. However, like all human productions, they have imperfections. Not a few of the observations are fanciful; and, while we have a very high opinion of Luther as a divine, we are obliged to observe, that some of his expressions about the mother of our Lord, the law of God, and Christian baptism, are rather unguarded. Perhaps we cannot do better than give the character which Melancthon has drawn of Luther as a writer and a preacher. "Pomeranus," says he, "is a grammarian, and explains the force of words; I profess logic, and teach the management and nature of arguments: Justus Jonas is an orator, and discourses with copiousness and elegance. — But Luther is *omnia in omnibus*, complete in every thing, a very miracle among men; whatever he says, whatever he writes, penetrates the mind." Zuinglius, who was his opponent on one point of doctrine, bore this testimony to Luther: "As far as I can judge, Luther is a very brave soldier of Christ, who examines the scriptures with a diligence which no person else has used for the last thousand years." — As a specimen of the style and doctrine of

these sermons we have selected the following passage, taken from the 108th page:—

“Wherefore understand this; that good works must follow a new creature, but to attain unto righteousness and that new creature they are able to help nothing at all; or otherwise is the grace of God wont to renew man, than as if God should turn some dry and withered block into a new green and flourishing tree, which may afterward bringing forth fruits plentifully; for the grace of God is a great, strong, very mighty, and marvellously effectual thing; it lieth not in the mind, as the school-men dream: it sleepeth not, or is born, as a painted table beareth a picture: it self-beareth, guideth, urgeth, draweth, changeth, and worketh all things in men, so that every one may feel and have experience of it; itself indeed is hid, but the works of it cannot be hid, but do witness of it, as the leaves and fruits do of the tree, of what nature it is.”

Socinianism unmasked: A Review of American Unitarianism, &c. &c. 8vo. pp. 45. Williams and Son.

WE cordially recommend this pamphlet to our young friends; and particularly to the students in all our theological seminaries.—Socinianism, when unmasked, makes a hideous appearance indeed! “Surely, in vain the net is spread, in the sight of any bird,” Prov. i. 17. Providence, in its wisdom and kindness, has so arranged things, that, where poisonous plants grow, there also antidotes will be found. American Unitarianism will be, we hope, like the *snake* of that country, which, (we are told,) by the alarming noise of its *rattle*, prevents many from being injured by its bite.

We shall not pollute our pages with the blasphemies of Mr. Belsham. Dr. Priestley, when wri-

ting to Mr. Lindsey, concerning Mr. Jefferson, the president of the United States, remarks, “*He is generally considered as an unbeliever: if so, however, he cannot be far from us; and, I hope, in the way to be, not only almost, but altogether, what we are.*”—The letter is dated, “Northumberland, April 23, 1803.” See the Appendix. Wicked men and seducers wax worse and worse. So it appears now, that Socinianism, or modern Unitarianism, is considerably *beyond the half-way house*, on the high road to infidelity.

The Brothers; or, Consequences. A Story of what happens every day, &c. By Mary Hays, pp. 71. Button.

A well-told tale; moral and entertaining—we should be glad to say, religious; but “one thing is needful.”—“Few good families will choose to take a young woman who has behaved with levity and imprudence, and who is continually changing her place.” P. 6. As this tract is written with considerable ability, and will, probably, often be reprinted, for the admonition of female servants, we take the liberty of recommending to the fair authoress, the expunging of the profane exclamation, which is repeatedly employed in p. 63.

David Dreadnought; or, Nautical Tales and Adventures in Verse. In four Parts. By Samuel Whitchurch.

WE have derived considerable amusement from this little work; and, from the piety of its sentiments, can most cordially recommend it to our readers. In the present day, it is much to be able to pronounce a poem perfectly free from profane or immoral expressions; for, whether poets are

often libertines, or whether society be deplorably corrupt, or both—certain it is, that the generality of the most popular of our poets, either misrepresent religion, or exclude it from their *demonstrating* pages. It is not, however, enough to say, that this production is free from improprieties; it is instructive. The great principles of the gospel are distinctly recognized; and the writer delights, not in stories of war and blood—of furies and fiends—of knights and castles—of dreams and sprites—but, in the history of saints, in accounts of conversion to God, in illustrations of Providence.

The third and fourth parts we deem particularly interesting; and they seem to us the best, in point of composition, for a reason which the reader will immediately conjecture, when we have quoted part of the author's preface:—

“ With respect to the most prominent characters in the third and fourth parts, I have been no phlegmatic observer, either of their actions or their destiny; and, if I may be allowed to venture so far, without incurring the charge of vanity, or unnecessary egotism, I might assert, of one of them in particular, that I have been deeply interested in part of the eventful history of his life; that I was his companion in the day of battle, and have fought and bled by his side; that I have been an *actor* in many of the scenes which are attempted to be delineated in his narrative; and that some of the incidents developed, and of the circumstances therein alluded to, are even now alive in my memory, and fresh in my recollections.”

Mr. Whitchurch is certainly possessed of considerable talents, and has a kind of *knack* (if we

may be allowed the expression) for this sort of writing. Some passages are really fine; but we cannot help regretting, that a number of tame ill-sounding lines, which might be easily altered, have clogged the narrative, and sometimes given it an air of dullness. “ We pass'd here, and sail'd by there,” is sometimes introduced, in rather too plain and prosaic a manner. A little more *management* would keep the narrative alive.—The closing lines may serve as a tolerable specimen of the book:—

“ What then is life, at its extremest span?
’Tis a brief voyage—the voyager is man:
He sets his sail, and pleasantly he glides
O’er the smooth waters, and thro’ curling tides;
While round his bark, bedeck’d with streamer gay,
Bright sun-beams wanton, and soft breezes play.
Anon, alarm’d, despairing of success,
He wanders on the sea’s dark wilderness;
Or duty’s toils, with trembling hand, performs,
Mid foaming breakers, and tempestuous storms;
Yet shall his bark, with Providence her guide,
Outlive all perils on the stormy tide;
Sail into port, tho’ toss’d and tempest-driven,
And anchor safely on the coast of heaven!”

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

Lately published,

Divine Energy; or, The efficacious Operations of the Spirit of God upon the Soul of Man, in his effectual Call and Conversion, stated, proved, and vindicated; wherein the real weakness and insufficiency of moral suasion, without the superaddition of the exceeding greatness of God’s power, for faith and conversion to God, are fully evinced; being an antidote against the Pelagian error. By John Skepp, with a Preface by the late John Gill, D.D. The third edition, revised by James Upton.

The Cause of the French Protestants defended. By J. Cobbin.

Shortly will be published,

Mr. Allen has, in the press, a work, to be entitled, Modern Judaism; or, A brief Account of the Opinions, Traditions, Rites, and Ceremonies, maintained and practised by the Jews in modern Times.

Dr. Ryland’s Memoirs of the late Rev. A. Fuller are in the Press, and may be expected shortly. The Public are respectfully informed that this is the ONLY WORK from which the family of Mr. Fuller will derive any pecuniary advantage.

Missionary Retrospect, and Foreign Intelligence.

BAPTIST MISSION.

*Extract of a Letter from Mr. Trowt,
Missionary, at Java.*

Samarang, May 29th, 1815.

BEFORE I make any observations on Samarang, it may be proper to state, that I continued preaching in the cantonment, and heard four of them express their reasons for desiring to make this profession of their love to Christ. We requested one of them to wait a little longer, and being satisfied with respect to the others, I agreed to baptize them next morning, as I expected to go on board in the course of the next day. We met at the river side at nine o'clock. After singing, I spoke in English, and Mr. Robinson in Malay, to the spectators: after praying in English, I baptized the candidates. When we came from the river, Mr. Robinson prayed in Malay, and I dismissed the people. The names of the brethren are, Robert Thomson, Angus Campbell, and Alexander Macleod; Serjeant Thomson is the regimental schoolmaster. The officers speak well of him, by whom he is well supported. He has a long time preached to a little company of private soldiers, who continue to unite with him daily in divine worship. Though not possessed of great abilities, he appears to be a holy, pious, prudent, and, I trust, will be a useful man. The moral characters of the other brethren appear without blemish. I review my acquaintance with this regiment with a considerable degree of pleasure. Their conduct, during worship, has been with the utmost propriety and attention. They have shewn me many little instances of respect, which have deeply interested me. I hope, it will one day appear, that some among them have been inclined to seek the Lord with purpose of heart. On the morning of the 15th and 23d, Mr. Robinson preached to them, as I hourly expected to be summoned on board; and he will continue to do so. I addressed them in the evening of those days. On the 24th, Mr. Robinson delivered a report of Mr. Coles's translation of Matthew's gospel, to the Bible Society, accompanied by a specimen of his own translation. The society, in consequence, rejected Mr. Coles's, and requested Mr. Robinson to proceed with his; they also allowed him a salary for a writer, and appointed him a member of

their committee. I fear, that the state of his health will prevent the speedy execution of this work. Mr. Robinson has lately preached five times a week. I expect he will baptize one of the Seroni ere long. This man appears to be truly pious. He was brought to consideration under Mr. Robinson's ministry, and has established, of his own accord, a meeting for prayer among the natives.

From Mr. Trowt, to his Parents.

Samarang, July 25th, 1815.

I HAVE acquired so much of the Malay, as enabled me to preach about half an hour, on the 29th of June; since that time, I have not preached, but I have visited the campongs, to get familiar with the language. Last sabbath day, I went out twice; in the morning, I met with a very pleasing reception among some of the people. I endeavoured to show them their lost condition; of their need of such a Saviour as Christ. They allowed, that many things I spoke, relating to Mahomedanism, were wrong; and, on proposing to visit them again, and bring some parts of the gospel to read to them, they expressed their cheerful concurrence; told me they had never heard such things before, and that they wished to know more. Who can tell what God can do? I have translated Watts's Shorter Catechism, and the History of the Old Testament, into Malay, and have sent them to Serampore to be printed. We have as yet done very little in Java; in fact, I can only be said to have studied it during the last week. Perhaps it would not be interesting to mention the little I imperfectly know of this curious language. In order to render some assistance to the mission, I have taken five young men, at the particular request of two gentlemen, for their instruction. I expect to get fifty dollars a month. Soon after arriving here, I went to Serandale, a place eight miles distant from hence, to preach to the soldiers of the 59th regiment, at the particular request of the members of one of our churches, which is formed among them. It was a hard day's work to ride there, preach, sometimes twice, and return again in the evening, with a body by no means as strong as when I left England; but, I have been more than amply compensated; the congregation increased—the attention of the people was excited—the church was encouraged—several proposed them-

selves to join the church:—and I have had the unspeakable pleasure of finding, that three persons, who now give pleasing hopes by their walk and conversation, that they are following the Lord, ascribe their first impressions to my poor attempts to set forth the gospel of the Saviour. Two of them were amongst the most profligate and abandoned in the army. Thus, you see, my dear parents, that the good will of Him, who dwelt in the bush, is graciously manifest to your poor child. Do not mourn, that I am separated from you for a few days; for, be assured, I would rather enjoy the honour with which I am distinguished, than the richest temporal possessions—than the most extensive empire. It would delight your souls to hear these poor soldiers relate how they despised the gospel when they lived in England, and how they love and esteem it now. They have subscribed several hundred rupees to the Bible Society. They gave me, before I went to them, one hundred and sixty for the support of our mission. They have established a mission subscription, which is in a very flourishing state.

AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE.

Extract of a Letter from the aged and venerable Dr. Stephen West, of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, to Dr. Ryland, of Bristol.

—“I can and do rejoice in the manifestations of divine grace, whether among Episcopalians or Baptists. I trust, the Lord has many precious souls among both. You kindly inquire respecting the state of religion in this place. Though the general attention of the people has much subsided, yet we have reason to hope, that there has been no falling away among those, who professed to experience the power of religion, in the late great revival of religion among us. And we have now thankfully to acknowledge the great mercy of God, in giving us encouragement to hope for another gracious visit from on high. A spirit of thoughtfulness and serious inquiry is prevailing. Several persons are much awakened and deeply impressed with a concern for their souls: one instance of apparent conversion, has recently occurred in a man, who not only had been very loose and thoughtless, but a ridiculer of all religion. The Lord grant the few present drops may increase into a plentiful shower.

“You will, doubtless, be glad to be informed, respecting the state of religion in this country. In New England, especially, there is an unusual attention to the

things of religion. A work of God's spirit appears to be great in many places; and the good work is spreading and increasing. We are at this time, blest with an uncommon revival in a number of towns in this country, (Berkshire, Massachusetts,) and many seem to be flocking to Christ. There has been a remarkable work of the Holy Spirit, as we have reason to believe, on the minds of the students, in three of our colleges in New England, and one in New Jersey, the spring and summer past. There is, it is thought, more attention to religion in this country, especially in New England, than there has been at any one period for seventy years past. What abundant reason have we for gratitude and praise to the great God and Saviour! This is the bright side of the picture: but I must not omit to give you the dark. In Massachusetts, among our leading characters and men of learning, Arianism and Socinianism, we have reason to fear, are but too prevalent; yet it is but a small proportion of the clergy or common people, who embrace those pernicious sentiments. The subject is come into public dispute, and I trust, the Lord will graciously raise up able defenders of the cause of truth, and that it will yet prevail among us.”

AMERICAN MISSIONARIES.

THE American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, have lately sent four Missionaries to Ceylon, viz. Rev. Daniel Poor, Horatio Bardwell, Benjamin Meigs, and Edward Warren. They sailed from Newburyport, Oct. 23d, 1815. A large concourse of people accompanied them to the beach, and the missionaries were commended to God in prayer, by the Rev. Dr. Spring; when the lines, in our last page, entitled, “Farewell to the Missionaries,” were sung.

LETTERS FROM FRANCE.

To the Editors of the Baptist Magazine.

THE enclosed Letter, I have just received from a Protestant Minister of Montpellier, through the medium of an eminent Physician in London. The writer is one of a most respectable body of informed Christians, who are influenced by principles, and animated by prospects, of a nature far superior to the mere party questions, that now agitate his afflicted country.

Should tranquillity be happily restored, and all the civil and religious privileges of the French Protestants be once more secured, we may yet hope to see, through

the philanthropic efforts now in progress, moral and religious principles established in the rising population of France, and such a degree of biblical light and information through them, communicated in a silent, gradual, but effectual way to the adjoining countries of Spain, Portugal, and Italy, as shall disperse moral darkness, destroy spiritual tyranny, and pave the way for the millennial reign of the KING MESSIAH! when "there shall be no hurting, or destroying through all his holy mountain." Yours respectfully,

Penzance, Nov. 1815.

G. C. S.

(LETTER.)

REV. AND HONOURED BROTHER,

I LEARNED yesterday, in the evening, from Mr. W. of Oxford, the lively interest that is taken by the British and Foreign School Society, of which you are a member, in the spiritual welfare of our churches; and I cannot deny myself the pleasure of testifying my gratitude to you for it, and of availing myself of Dr. M.'s return to London, to acquaint you with the situation of my flock; and to ask your advice, on some points that appear to me important. I feel peculiarly happy in embracing this opportunity of writing to you concerning the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ; and truly happy shall I be, if I may hope to establish a religious correspondence between us, which would be so truly delightful and profitable, under present circumstances.

That you may be fully acquainted with my real circumstances, I beg to inform you, that I was born in Geneva, and after a suitable course of studies, was ordained at the age of twenty-five. At this time, I had so strong a predilection in favour of your country, that it was with difficulty I could relinquish the thought of visiting it, before I assumed a pastoral charge. I was soon appointed, by the professors, to occupy the pulpit of Montpellier, in which, I am now assisted by Mr. M. At this period, I only knew the Bible as a book which contained the best system of morality philosophers could invent. Unhappily, I devoted my youth to a multiplicity of studies, without any reference to the one thing needful. I only aimed at rhetorical figure, and striking expressions. I wished only to produce oratorical effect. I consulted the Bible only to find passages in it, which I could use for this purpose. Alas! I was a blind leader of the blind. Such, however, were the merciful dispensations of Divine Providence towards me, that, in my new situation, I formed an acquaintance with some who were really children

of God. The most eminent of these were, Monsieur B—, then pastor of Mapillarges, and now professor of Hebrew, at Montauban; and Monsieur E—, dean of the faculty of sciences, at Montpellier, and now professor of theology, at Montauban. The latter resided at Montpellier, and distinguished himself equally by the extent and solidity of his knowledge, and by his sincere and lively attachment to that Saviour, whom his venerable father had so faithfully served, during the late stormy period. He was willing to honour me with his friendship, to assist me with his counsels, and to teach me what foundation I ought to build on, as a good minister of Jesus Christ. From this time, I directed my exertions to a noble purpose; and the increase which the Lord has graciously granted to the small measure of seed sown, covers me with shame and confusion.

There had been a School for indigent Children in Montpellier, but it was nearly extinct, and I have had the happiness of being a feeble instrument, in the Lord's hands, of reviving it. But many imperfections still remain, and many obstacles are to be surmounted. In this country, we have not books that are necessary for the children of our community. The method of teaching is tedious, ineffectual, and expensive. To obtain the needful sacrifices, from people who, according to the expression of Isaiah, "only love to spend their money for that which profiteth not," is extremely difficult. We have to encounter the utmost indifference in parents, and the most distressing insubordination in the children, who are accustomed to no restraint: such, in a few words, is the state of our school. I have prevailed upon twelve ladies of our principal families to superintend the girl's school, and, thanks to the Lord, this department begins to prosper: but for that of the boys, I need instructions from those who take the lead in this branch of public benevolence; and, it is on this account, I take the liberty of addressing those who have so happily succeeded in the plan of education for France. We can procure Bibles, blessed be God, though at too high a price to admit of distributing so many as are wanted. Many families, however, that were strangers to the Bible, begin now to be provided with it. Religious books, in general, are greatly wanted. Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*, is out of print. Uninformed people want books adapted to their capacity: but there are none in France. The scarcity of sacramental books is particularly felt, as those who consider them necessary to a suitable preparation, remain without the benefit of this divine ordinance.

The people confined in our prisons, above all, are in the utmost need of instruction; and though I delight in leading them to the fountain of living waters, that they may drink of those streams that make glad the city of our God; yet I find my preaching to them once a-week is very insufficient. They ask me for books; and it is with the greatest difficulty that I can furnish them with a few Testaments and prayer books. Projects for multiplying religious books, of every kind, have often occurred to me; but, either from the consciousness of my own weakness, the want of time (which I ought to devote entirely to preaching, on account of the ticklish ears of my audience, and to the instruction of catechumens,) or the want of pecuniary means, to which I am extremely limited, I have done nothing yet, except that I intend to introduce into my church the Handelburg Catechism, of which I shall publish a new Edition.

Experience has long taught me what is likely to be within the reach of different minds; and, if I had some English books, calculated to supply the deficiency I so much lament, I would strain hard to translate them, as their established reputation would induce some persons willingly to contribute to the publication of such works. In this manner, I might perhaps stimulate the public taste for a kind of works so truly important to the triumph of truth, and the benefit of the Church of Christ.—I beg you then my honoured brother to send me word what books you consider most suitable to the states of my flock, that I may become acquainted with them, and enrich our language with some of your pious English publications, if they are not already translated. I also beg you to give Dr. M. the titles of two of your most approved Commentaries on the Bible. One for sacred criticism, the other for doctrine, because I wish to know those English commentators, that I have not yet had the privilege of consulting. Monsieur G. pastor of St. Hipolite, with whom I have the pleasure of being particularly acquainted, has engaged me to translate Milner's History of the Church of Christ: telling me, that it is truly edifying: It would indeed be a useful work on many accounts, but I only know it by report, and you will sincerely oblige me, by informing me if it is already translated into French. I have reason to apologize for so many questions and commissions; but I have no other means of gaining information of this kind. Besides, I feel so much the need of instruction in the things which belong to my salvation, and to that of my brethren, that I fear not the reproach of importunity. How should I fear it, when addressing myself to my

brethren in Christ, in England, who anticipate the want of them, who hunger and thirst after the word of God, and who themselves invite them to have recourse to them for assistance. Be not surprized then, reverend and honoured brother, that a stranger presumes to address you: but, for the love of the Master whom you serve, condescend to instruct a solitary individual in what relates to your establishments, for the general good of Christian churches; to honour me with your advice, and to accept the assurance of esteem and brotherly love with which I have the honour of being, Your humble, Servant,
Montpellier, Oct. 10, 1815. A. L. L.

Rev. G. C. Smith, Penzance, Cornwall.

ANOTHER LETTER,

FROM A PRESIDENT OF CONISTOIRE,
IN THE SOUTH.

I RECEIVED, with great pleasure, the letter you did me the honour of writing. I greatly regret that your journey was not extended to Montpellier. Should have felt great satisfaction in seeing and conversing with you on the great object you had in view; that of rendering men better by religion, which alone confirms them in morality and grace. One of the principal causes that retards the progress of the gospel, and the advancement of the glory of God, in our country, is, the ignorance of the people; the little knowledge they have of Christian religion prevents them from deriving comfort from that source, which is alone the word of God. The want of knowing what is good, is often the source of evil. Your society, in propagating the knowledge of the holy scriptures, present to us, a perfect specimen of humanity, and in that respect alone, of what praise is it not worthy? The want of Christian schools is generally felt among us. Some churches have them, but too many are without them. We also want some elementary books to give the people, and the Catechism will not supply their place, because dialogues interrupt the thread of the discourse, and take away the interest of it.

RUSSIA.

THE Bible Society in Russia is rivalling the zeal of the British Society. They have already printed, or are printing, the scriptures, in fourteen different versions. The president, Prince Galitzen, has lately addressed an interesting letter to a poor Christian woman in Scotland, in answer to one addressed by her to the committee. We hope to be able to give this remarkable correspondence in a future number.

Domestic Religious Intelligence.

PERSECUTED PROTESTANTS IN FRANCE.

WE have presented our readers, in our former Number, with the spirited resolutions of the Dissenting Ministers in London, on the subject of the Persecutions in the South of France. Notwithstanding the difficulty of obtaining information from France, on account of the danger apprehended by the writers, enough has been received to convince unprejudiced persons, that a violent assault has been made upon the Protestants of Nismes, Uzès, and the neighbouring villages. Many persons have been massacred, great numbers have suffered in their property, and others have fled to distant Protestant towns. Attempts have been made, in some of the public prints, to decry the exertions of those who have taken public measures to expose the authors of these calamities, and to attribute them to mere *political* causes. Though we have no doubt of the truth of the letters published by the Dissenting Ministers, and the Protestant Society, we anxiously wait for further details; as, we understand, suitable means have been employed to obtain full and perfect information of the extent of misery, and losses sustained on this distressing occasion. At present, a want of room makes it necessary we should confine ourselves to the "Resolutions" published by the Committee of the "Red Cross Street Library," on Jan. 12, 1816.

"At a Meeting of the Committee, appointed by the General Body of Protestant Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations, 'for the Purpose of Inquiry, Superintendence, and Distribution of the Funds which may be contributed for Relief of the French Protestants, suffering for Conscience' sake,'

"It was unanimously Resolved,

"1. That this Committee have observed, with astonishment and regret, that attempts are making, through the medium of the press, to defeat their object, by misrepresenting their motives; and although the Committee know too well what is due to that respectable body by which they are deputed, to engage in useless warfare with those who are labouring to stifle that public sympathy, which it is the wish of the body to excite, they yet owe

it to their own character, and to the cause they have undertaken, to state candidly, once for all, the motives by which they have been guided, and the end they have in view.

"2. That this Committee, therefore, utterly disclaim, for themselves and their Constituents, all party feelings on a question which they conceive to be purely and exclusively religious; but, that, if they must be ranked with a party, they are happy in ranking, on this occasion, with that of the government which listened so candidly to their representations,—entered so warmly into their feelings,—and pledged itself so readily to employ its good offices for the same humane purpose to which their interference has been directed.

"3. That if any man, calling himself a Protestant, can impute to Dissenting Ministers, as a crime, that they have shewn themselves peculiarly forward, on this occasion, he should remember that they are the descendants of those who, for conscience' sake, suffered the spoiling of their goods, and the loss of their lives; and to whose constancy, under persecution, it is chiefly owing that religious liberty is now firmly established in this favoured land.

"4. That, feeling the value of this inestimable blessing, they could not but be deeply interested by any occurrence which might threaten its loss to those, especially with whom they are united by the tie of a common faith, and a common worship; nor could they refuse their sympathy, or their relief, to men bleeding in the same cause which rendered the memory of their fathers immortal.

"5. That though letters have been received from Ministers in France, expressing objections to the interference of their Protestant brethren in England, the Committee have ascertained, from *unquestionable evidence*, that some of those letters have been written under *constraint*; and that others have been dictated by an apprehension (it is hoped erroneous) lest such an interference should injure them in the estimation of their own Government, or rather, lest it should expose them to the fury of a faction, which sets the Government itself at defiance; and the Committee are of opinion, that, if complaints are cautiously uttered, they deserve, the more, the consideration and

sympathy of those who are aware of the cause in which this caution originates.

"6. That while they have been acting consistently with their own principles, in expressing their abhorrence of all religious persecution, by whomsoever practised or countenanced, they cannot but suppose that, in contributing to alleviate the distresses of the French Protestants, they are coinciding with the intentions of the French Government, which has been taking measures to suppress those outrages, which, if not suppressed, must occasion its own disgrace, and compromise its own safety.

"7. That, in the Subscriptions and Collections already made,—in the spirit which is spreading throughout the kingdom,—and in the prospect that this spirit will ultimately enable them to grant important relief to their suffering brethren, and to the widows and orphans of the victims of persecution, the Committee have the most flattering encouragement to persevere. They do, therefore, most earnestly request the unremitting co-operation of Protestants of every denomination, but especially of Protestant Dissenters, in this labour of love; and they express their confident assurance, that, in contributing to this object, without suffering their zeal to be damped by any insinuations or assertions whatever, they are promoting the spread and establishment of that Christian liberty which is the greatest earthly boon that heaven can bestow on man.

"Signed (by order of the Committee)
"THOMAS MORGAN, Secretary."

BAPTIST ITINERANT SOCIETY.

By letters sent us, by the above Society, it appears, that several ministers in the country, are labouring extensively in the villages of their respective residences; and not without evidences of success. The limits of our Work, will not admit of the insertion of the letters, but we feel happy to bear our testimony to the utility of this Institution, and should be gratified to hear, that the funds were so increased, as to enable the Society to grant assistance to village preaching, to a much greater extent than it at present can afford.

POOR'S RATES {ON MEETING HOUSES.

Surrey Sessions, January, 1816.

ANOTHER attempt was made to compel the assessment of SURREY CHAPEL, to the poor's rates of the parish of Christ Church, Surrey. It was successfully resisted, for the fourth time, by The Rev.

ROWLAND HILL, under the direction, and at the expense, of "The Protestant Society." The errors of the person who wished to enforce such assessment, have again, as upon the former occasions, effected his defeat, even without a discussion of the main question, as to the real liability to assessment of *Trustees of Meeting Houses*, who appropriate ALL the receipts to "NECESSARY" expenses alone, and who derive no individual or collective advantage, and which question, the Society intended, and were prepared to discuss. From this additional defeat, we are encouraged to hope, that this recent burden will not be generally imposed, if any efforts to introduce it be uniformly contested with similar firmness and equal discretion.

NEW CHURCH FORMED.

HOLY CROSS, WORCESTER.

ON Lord's day, November 12, 1815, a church, of the particular Baptist denomination, was formed at Holy Cross, a village on the road between Bromsgrove and Stourbridge, in Worcestershire. Mr. Griffin, of Kidderminster, presided on the occasion, and, at the close of the service, administered the Lord's supper.

The brethren, six in number, were members of the church at Bradley, (about four miles distant,) and had received a respectful dismissal for the above purpose.

It is hoped the little one will become a thousand, and that this little hill of Zion may be as fruitful as Lebanon.

WIDOWS' FUND.

THE Annual Sermon, recommending the useful purposes of the Society for the relief of the necessitous Widows and Children of Protestant Dissenting Ministers, will be preached, by the Rev. Dr. Collyer, on Wednesday, the 3d day of April, at the Old Jewry Chapel, removed to Jewin-street, Aldersgate-street; service to begin at Twelve o'clock; after which, the Subscribers and Friends will dine together, at the New London Tavern, in Cheapside, dinner to be on table at Four o'clock.

BAPTIST MONTHLY PRAYER MEETING IN LONDON.

THE first meeting, held at Mr. Austin's meeting-house, Elin-chapel, Fetter-lane, 16, 1816, was well attended. Messrs. Griffin, Hutchings, and Austin engaged in the devotional services, and Mr. Cox delivered an instructive and animated address, from 1 Thess. v. 13.

RIOTS

AT THE

BAPTIST MEETING HOUSE, LONGWICK, BUCKS.

THE utility of the New Toleration Act, and of the exertions of "The Protestant Society," has been demonstrated during the past month. On Lord's-day evening, November 30, 1815, the congregation, assembling for worship at the Baptist Meeting House, at Longwick, near Princes Risborough, Bucks, were repeatedly alarmed by bricks and stones thrown against the windows and door, and by external and tumultuous shouts and clamour. By the exertions of Mr. Hester, the principal offender, Geo. Stevens, was apprehended. On application from the people, and by the suggestion of Lord Carrington, who acts as a neighbouring magistrate, the Committee of the Protestant Society kindly undertook the prosecution. The delinquent, by the advice of some powerful friends, had adopted every possible

means to delay the trial, and to avoid punishment; but the Society indicted him under the New Act, for disturbing the congregation, although he did not enter the place, and which, under the former Toleration Acts, could not have been effected. He was tried, at Aylesbury, at the October Sessions, for the county of Bucks, and, after a trial, which lasted many hours, he was found guilty. In conformity to the provisions of the New Act, which has doubled the former penalty of twenty pounds, and has left the magistrates without any discretion as to the nature and amount of the punishment, he was, on January 14th, in the present year, brought up for judgment and was sentenced to pay the full sum of Forty Pounds. We regret the necessity for such proceedings; but as they are unfortunately too frequently required, we are happy, that a Society exists, which, without any respect to parties, or to denominations, affords protection and security to all dissenters, who need their interposition and assistance.

Poetry.

FAREWELL

TO THE MISSIONARIES.

SOVEREIGN of worlds! display thy pow'r,
Be this thy Zion's favour'd hour;
Bid the bright morning star arise,
And point the nations to the skies.
Set up thy throne where Satan reigns,
On Afric's shore, on India's plains,
On wilds and continents unknown—
And be the universe thine own!
Speak! and the world shall hear thy voice:
Speak! and the desert shall rejoice!
Scatter the shades of moral night:
Let worthless idols flee the light!
Trusting in Him, dear brethren, rear
The gospel standard, void of fear!
Go, seek with joy your destin'd shore,
To view your native land no more.
Yes—Christian heroes!—go—proclaim
Salvation through IMMANUEL's name;
To India's clime the tidings bear,
And plant the rose of Sharon there.
He'll shield you with a wall of fire
With flaming zeal your breast inspire;
Bid raging winds their fury cease,
And hush the tempest into peace.
And when our labours all are o'er,
Then we shall meet to part no more;
Meet with the blood-bought throng to fall,
And crown our Jesus, LORD OF ALL!

LINES,

ON THE DEATH OF A BELOVED INFANT.

Addressed to Mrs. L—.

SLEEP on, sweet babe! securely rest;
Nor pain nor sorrow can molest!
Exchang'd is every mortal strife;
For immortality and life! [crush'd,
Though our fond hopes and schemes are
And, with thee, laid beneath the dust,
Yet still we would not dare complain;
Our loss is thy eternal gain!
The gracious Pow'r that gave thee birth,
And lent thee to thy friends on earth,
Kindly forbade a longer stay,
Where thorns so thickly strew the way.
Like as we move the choicest flowers,
To save from blasts, or storms, or showers,
He took thee from this vale of woe,
Where noxious winds and vapours blow,
To breathe in pure and heav'nly air,
To flourish ever young and fair;
To live in Jesu's kind embrace,
And bask amid refulgent grace!
'There, cloth'd in beams of purest light,
'Midst seraphs and archangels bright,
Thy happy spirit ever, ever sings
The highest praises of the King of kings!

Birmingham.

I. C.





THE REV^d DR FAWCETT,

Halifax